

THE MACEDONIA CALL: AN EVANGELISTIC AND EDUCATIONAL  
OUTREACH MINISTRY BRIDGE TO  
THE CARIBBEAN

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE MACEDONIA CALL: AN EVANGELISTIC AND EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH MINISTRY BRIDGE TO THE CARIBBEAN**

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#### **Mentors**

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The context of this project was Trinity African Methodist Episcopal Church in Newberry, South Carolina. The theme was to design and build a supportive Outreach Evangelistic and Educational Caribbean Bridge for Pastors and lay leaders. The hypothesis is, if participants participated in this teaching and training project, then they will explore the understanding of concepts and thoughts to gather the project's effectiveness and applicability. The six week project used a qualitative approach. The methodology used an Evangelism Training Manual, Technology and Pre/Post-tests. Collected data confirmed participants' identifiable strengths, weaknesses and accomplishments of the project's social and spiritual activities.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

It was never an established goal to enroll in a Doctor of Ministry program. I did not hesitate when the opportunity was presented to me. I had concerns about the demand of time and financial responsibility that this undertaking would require. Optimism seized the day and I took the step of faith and commenced the journey in August 2018 at United.

There are no words adequate to express my gratitude to my mentors, Rev. Dr. Kenneth Cummings, Sr., Dr. Robert Walker and Dr. Brenda Braam. They have served and supported with humility, graciousness, and persistent love. It is true that they were a phone call, text or email away. Dr. Mary Walker has been a source of constant light and positive energy of “you can make it.” I thank her and Dr. Cummings for editing and invaluable assistance in preparing for Candidacy and Format Review.

A special thanks to Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr., Prelate of the seventh Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (South Carolina), who placed immense confidence in my ministry and became invaluable support throughout my studies at United. It is refreshing, reassuring and faith building to have a visionary Bishop.

Rev. Basdeo Singh (deceased), a dedicated deacon, is forever my mentor. Since meeting him in 1970, he exemplified love for Christ and sacrificial service for the church. He thrust me into my first exploration of biblical studies in Jamaica at Fairview Baptist Bible College. He designated and supported me as the Principal and Director of the

Guyana Bible College (1980). His unwavering belief in my undiscovered potential served to strengthen and expand my horizon and vision.

My deepest appreciation to my wife, Maxine, and two beautiful daughters, Corie-Ann and Chelsee for their unfailing moral support, constant encouragement and creative ways to allow me time to write and reflect during this adventure.

I am saddened by the fact that my father and mother, Ramcharan and Jamuni Seepersaud, are not present to celebrate this achievement with me. They accepted Christ as their Savior in 1980 when I was the Pastor of Kitty Baptist Church and Principal of Guyana Bible College. I owe them much.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to Maxine, Cori-Ann and Chelsee who are the love of my life. They have shared in this arduous but joyous journey. Maxine's persistent encouragement forced me to continue even when I wanted to procrastinate and slacken the reigns.

I also dedicate this work to my six siblings. Three are deceased: Ookah (Betty), Hardai (Roma), and Dularie (Penny). The remaining three are Jagassar (Sabu), Chandresh (Rick), and Lelawatie (Lela). But I want to make a special dedication to Penny, my deceased sister, a forever loyal and devoted friend and angel who sacrificed her life and future to take care of me. I wished she were here to share in this occasion.

Ramcharan and Jamuni Seepersaud were very dear and devoted parents. They wanted their children to get an education and succeed; even though my father had a grade school education and my mother never attended school.



## **ABBREVIATION**

AME	African Methodist Episcopal
FBBC	Fairview Baptist Bible College
GGBC	Gravel Ground Baptist Church
IBC	Independent Bible Church
KBC	Kitty Baptist Church
KJV	King James Version
LBC	Lighthouse Baptist Church
LXX	Septuagint (The Greek Old Testament)
SHBC	Summer Haven Bible Camp
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
UTS	United Theological Seminary
VBS	Vacation Bible School

Evangelism is just one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.

—Daniel T. Niles, A – Z Quotes

## **INTRODUCTION**

The genesis of my Theological journey was birthed in a visit to the United Theological Seminary and an introduction to Dr. Robert Walker and Dr. Kenneth Cummings, mentors of the Prophetic Preaching and Praxis. These mentors' spiritual fervor, genuine humility and openness about their lives and ministry captivated my interest and attention. However, it was not until a year after that meeting and with the constant encouragement from my wife that I finally walked on the campus as a Doctor of Ministry student in August 2018. This pursuit is in addition to being a husband, a father of two young ladies, a full time employee as a Program Coordinator in Child Protective Services at the South Carolina Department of Social services and an itinerant pastor at Trinity African Methodist Episcopal Church in Newberry, South Carolina. This new challenge has been a sacrificial faith walk and an overwhelming experience of the Lord's amazing providential care and financial provision.

As a convert to Christianity from Hinduism at the age of fourteen, my life was placed on a different trajectory from many of my friends, instead of working at a sugar cane rum factory as expected of youths in my village, I sensed a calling of God on my life. I began a serious pursuit of studying the Bible. I took all the free correspondence courses offered on the radio, newspapers and by churches. I became actively involved in all ministry activities at my local assembly which was filled with youths from a racially diverse background. My village comprised of racial and religious diversity that produced

tension especially at national political elections. So love, tolerance and acceptance were embraced in a meaningful way.

In my search for the fulfillment of God's calling on my life, I met Rev. Basdeo Singh, an ordained deacon at Creen Street Baptist Church in Georgetown, Guyana. His passion for ministry took him as a pastor evangelist to communities where individual urgently pleaded for him to share the gospel. My introduction to Rev. Basdeo Singh was dramatically life changing and so impacting that I joined a Home Bible Class that he taught, and then participated in his evangelistic and pastoral ministry to several congregations that were without a pastor and depended on his ministry. This was ground breaking in itineracy preaching for me. I watched his family life, study habits, prayer life and selfless love for God's people and small struggling churches. He never asked or took a salary. He financed his ministry from his salary as the Chief Financial Officer of a private company. This exposure and mentoring in Christian service and sacrifice has left an indelible impression on me. He introduced and sponsored my theological education at Guyana Bible College and later at Fairview Baptist Bible College in Jamaica.

My pastoral ministry started at Cheltenham Baptist Church, St. Elizabeth in Jamaica where as a student I served a small congregation. I was later recruited as the first national hired to teach at Fairview Baptist Bible College. I returned to serve in Guyana at Kitty Baptist Church in Georgetown, and I also served as the Principal/President of Guyana Bible College. In the mid 1980's, I was the founder and director of Summer Haven Bible Camp in Brooklyn/Queens, New York with the intent of soul winning (evangelism) and developing and supporting the gifts and graces of counsellors

designated for this ministry. During this time I had begun the Master of Divinity degree and was an Associate Baptist pastor.

After marriage and moving to South Carolina, I was able to complete the Master of Divinity degree at Erskine Theological Seminary. The African Methodist Episcopal Church became the place of family worship and ministry in 1995. I have several congregations and in November 2013, Trinity AME Church in Newberry was the designated field of service. An assessment of the catchment area revealed that this family oriented church needed to evangelize and bring in new members if this congregation is to survive to the next generation. I have introduced and organized a camping ministry as well as conducted evangelism seminars in addition to other outreach ministries aimed at soul winning. It became a reinforced passion to me embarking on theological teaching, preaching and evangelism training as a survival skill. So, going back to the days after my conversion and throughout my ministry, the stirring passion has been to fulfill the Great Commission and to reach back to the Caribbean where I know about the desperate need that exists in churches and its leadership for theological and education training and support. Hence my thesis and doctoral project is entitled, “The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Educational Outreach Ministry-Bridge to the Caribbean.”

Chapter one, Ministry Focus, addresses and retraces my faith walk from conversion from Hinduism, introductory excursions into ministry opportunities in Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada and the United States. These cross-cultural, multi-raced and geographical influences have fashioned my worldview, opened up doors of ministry opportunities, and challenged me to explore a variety of social action avenues where Christ is proclaimed in word and deed. At Trinity AME Church, in

addition to my vision of an evangelistic outreach to the unchurched, the challenge increased because a discouraged congregation was focused on rebuilding their sanctuary which was destroyed by an ice storm in February 2014. Without losing focus on the unreached, the composite vision was building a modern sanctuary that will accommodate 250 occupants. Trinity's mortgage is satisfied, the Nehemiah Rebuilding Fund has almost doubled to over \$130,000 since I started at United (2018), a bank loan was secured and finally on November 23, 2020, the Seventh Episcopal District Board of Trustees approved Trinity to begin its building of a sanctuary. I will rely on a rebuilding experience that occurred at the Guyana Bible College in 1980. My excitement is overwhelming as I think of the prospect at Trinity rebuilding its sanctuary and the task of evangelistic endeavors to reach the community.

Chapter two, Biblical; Foundations, rests on Acts 16:9-10 that documented Paul's night vision when he heard the Macedonia Call, "Come over to Macedonia and Help us." Paul and his team's immediate obedience into Europe resulted Lydia's conversion. Then Paul delivered a demon possessed slave girl whose gift of witchcraft and divination profited the city merchants. This loss of profits resulted in Paul and Silas being terribly beaten and jailed. That jail house became a "salvation station" as the jailer was saved. He had observed the miraculous release of his prisoners, but more powerfully, he heard Paul and Silas praying, singing and I believe, preaching. My doctoral project is founded on the call to evangelism and the theological training with the dramatic and transformational impact of the gospel as witnessed in Acts 16.

Chapter three, Historical Foundations, is drawn from the life and ministry of Bishop Francis Asbury whose footprint in American Methodism is as large as the

Methodist founder, John Wesley in England. A long neglected figure in religious history, Asbury was an Englishman of ordinary humble origin with little education, and a blacksmith who answered the call of God with an appeal for service of Methodist ministers in America. His “Macedonia Call” led him to America, where Asbury possessed a determined spirit, traveled extensively on horseback, preached at every opportunity, held annual conferences, and ordained ministers all the while suffering from severe physical pain, sickness and depravations. In America, he almost singlehandedly forged what Methodism is and became. Many were saved, hundreds of churches were formed, thousands of ministers were ordained and in the summary he was an American Saint, accomplishing extraordinary things.

Chapter four, Theological Foundations, speaks to several threads of doctrines implanted in Acts 16, and relevant to the Macedonia Call. Bibliology traces the theme of redemption, faith, salvation and evangelism throughout the Bible beginning in Gen 3:16. Christology is God’s answer to a bad situation. Ecclesiology is the Church built on a solid foundation and sent to proclaim the unmerited love and infinite grace in Christ. Practical Theology is the expression and intent of evangelism through preaching, teaching and counseling.

Chapter five, Interdisciplinary Foundation Paper, examines pedagogy’s principles, philosophy, and methodology and their implications for biblical teaching and evangelism implementation. Jesus was a Master Teacher with unsurpassed skills, deepest insight and astonishing influence on his audience. Teaching is a gift endowed by the Holy Spirit to certain individuals for the edification and expansions of the Church. The Great

Commission includes the command, “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have command you (Matthew 28:20).”

Chapter six, Project Analysis, addresses “The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Educational Outreach Ministry-Bridge to the Caribbean” with restating the thesis hypothesis, exploring the methodology employed to gather the data, documenting the measurement and instrumentation of the project, and detailing the implementation and outcomes with data analysis of the project. Also, the stakeholders who were part of this project will be listed. The summary of learning from Intensives and Focus Group sessions throughout the Doctor of Ministry program at United will be incorporated. A concluding statement on the replicability of this initiative and project will be indicated.

### **Contributors**

This project will address identified and attainable needs of overseas churches that Trinity African Methodist Episcopal Church and other local US congregations will sponsor. The objectives will be determined by pastors and congregations abroad. Each outreach will begin with a needs assessment to include a cost, time and manpower analysis. The ministry teams will address the vision and mission of evangelism, providing theological training to pastors, and lay-congregants and where possible, engage in community-wide social action of being “Salt of the earth and Light of the world” (Matthew 5:13-14). Evangelism training will be conducted, and a manual with pre and post-test questionnaires will be employed to evaluate effectiveness and applicability of this ministry project. Also, a detail checklist will be used as a template for team work overseas. It was oriented towards issues of recruitment, fundraising and finances, diet and



food safety, logistics, transportation, sleeping accommodation, and medical emergencies.

The “Macedonia Call” ministry from the United States will be channeled, monitored and evaluated by both local and overseas entities to identify strengths, weaknesses and accomplishments.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **MINISTRY FOCUS**

Upon graduating from Fairview Baptist Bible College (FBBC) in 1977, the author wrote a statement that was published in the Baccalaureate Program describing what the author's future educational and ministry objective would be. It recently dawned on the author that as this project paper was being written; the author looked back and was shocked and surprised that a seemingly unrealistic yet ambitious wish and expressed desire has come to fruition some forty years later. The statement was an expressed desire to pursue a higher theological education for the benefit of the church and its leaders. That desire was delayed and detoured through many difficult personal, family, and professional barriers.

It was in March 2016 that the author was sitting in a conference room at United Theological Seminary (UTS) in Dayton, Ohio with a friend. The author was there as a personal reference when a friend (Phil F.) that was defending his doctoral dissertation. Phil and the author drove eight hours to the UTS Ohio Campus from Columbia, SC. During the long drive, and even before, Phil F. encouraged the author to become a doctoral student in the Prophetic Preaching and Praxis Focus Group at the seminary. Phil F. excitedly shared the ministry learning experiences, educational pursuits, the comradery within the program, as well as the nurturing and caring supervision that this program provided from outstanding mentors, Dr. Robert Walker and Dr. Kenneth Cummings. So,

the author was fascinated to hear and witness the defense of Phil F.'s thesis. The author watched as the team questioned Phil F. in probing and examining Phil's doctoral dissertation paper.

During the lunch break, the author had the opportunity to be introduced to Dr. Walker and Dr. Cummings. They shared at length, detailing their pastoral works, community involvement, social injustice issues, family life, and mentorship at United. The author was drawn to their style of interaction, openness, and their personal interest in candidates that they mentored at United. So, before the author and Phil F. left, the registration process was completed with the Dean of United, Dr. Harold. The Dean waived the registration fee, challenged and motivated the author to become part of the United Theology Seminary's family.

A year passed without any movement or follow-up on the United Theological Seminary Application/Registration process. It was sometime in 2017 that the author and his wife, Maxine, discussed the UTS opportunity, financial obligations and other benefit options versus other closer theological programs available. The author finally called UTS and completed the registration and application process to begin in August 2018.

The journey to at UTS was sprinkled with hints of the miraculous as evidenced by favorable encouragements from family and friends, sponsorships and other financial support. The first week of intensives in August 2018 at UTS was filled with apprehension. The author wondered and worried about how he would do, how he would fit back in the classroom and operate in the technology driven environment at UTS. The worry was ill conceived as the author settled in, mixed with others from a wide range of races, ages, countries, denominational backgrounds, and ministry experiences. Some

friendships were formed. The fellowship meals and conversations were meaningful as we shared who we are, where we were from, what influences impacted our decision to attend UTS, and what our ministry involvements were with one another. The worship and preaching were timely, and the speakers addressed current social, political, economic and spiritual landscapes where there is the necessity for a prophetic voice and compassionate practice of righteousness and social justice. The UTS week of intensives taught the author the value of relationships and the “blending of lives” as one cannot walk alone without fear.

At the first focus group in Beaumont, Texas, the author learned to appreciate and enjoy the gracious hospitality, sacrifice, selflessness, teamwork, and support for a pastor that was expended throughout the week. The author saw excellence in preparation and presentation that the host pastor exemplified as a way that could be imitated. Occasions will arise in the author’s ministry that will be benefitted from this exposure of going to the greatest degree of excellence for everyone. The Scriptures admonish, “Whatsoever thy hand find to do, do it with all thy might;” and “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.”

Further, the author gathered that there must be areas to force listen and exercise tolerance and understanding since there will be things said, views expressed, and value judgments made that the author may not fully embrace. At this point, the author began learning to see the other person’s point of view and appreciate what has shaped their thinking and beliefs. The author took some notes regarding things that were not only meaningful but may become useful in some future activities and ideas of ministry opportunities that are outside of the box, innovative and practical. The focus group

demonstrated community learning and the author observed fellow classmates who were more advanced in the doctoral studies rallying to explain, assist and illustrate what some of the more obscure nuances they saw, how to avoid pitfalls and where resources can be accessed.

### **Context**

The author's ministry context is the one hundred and seventy-year old Trinity African Methodist Church in the Silverstreet Community of Newberry, South Carolina. This is a rural area of the county where the cotton industry bloomed until the textile companies relocated to other countries on account of cheaper labor. The milk and dairy industries have also become modernized and mechanized so the demand for a manual labor force has been diminished. Newberry has a mostly European settled population. This county was affected with the segregation issues of the reconstruction era. Schools for Blacks and minorities were held in Black churches or small buildings connected to Black enterprises. Minorities were relegated to menial, unskilled and manual jobs, working in the mills, factories, on the assembly-lines, and as household servants. At the time, these were the basic job opportunities available. It is only recently (the past twenty-five years or so) that Blacks and minorities were able to work in the social service fields, Law Enforcement, banking, public schools and so forth. Today, there is still only one Black own day care in the county. There are very few Black own businesses throughout the county. These include three funeral homes. There is no blatant display of racial biases or discrimination, but there is very minimal cooperation on shared religious projects between churches of diverse racial makeup. Recently, there were a few major industrial

companies such as Samsung, Packaging Corporation of America, and Caterpillar that have located to Newberry County which have hundreds of employees.

The writer's observation is that around the early 1960's, Black families migrated to points North; they moved to places, especially large cosmopolitan centers like New York, Hartford, Boston, District of Columbia, Chicago and so forth. The incentive for this was a betterment in employment, housing, health care and educational opportunities. The Black Church and communities experienced a mass exodus. But they remembered to financially support their "home church" and make visits for special occasions, such as homecoming, revival and family reunion.

The Trinity AME Church membership is all relationally related and the church has survived through generations with a nucleus of several families. Depletion through death and migration has impacted church membership in a negative way. The membership has remained in a fairly consistent status with some returning residents and birthing of new babies. Like so many family-churches, there is a lack of outward vision and evangelistic fervor. The burden for the lost in the community has not been a priority over the years. The prevailing attitude is, if they come, they come. Outreach consists of feeding the poor at Thanksgiving and at Christmas; help burned out residents, friends or neighbors, and helping financially with medical bills.

This is the author's fifth year with the Trinity AME Church congregation. The author has a three-fold ministry priority which is based on a few biblical texts: Matthew 28:16-20; 2 Timothy 2:2 and Acts 16. The author's first aim for Trinity is to be biblically literate through systematic expository preaching and teaching, not just knowing the Bible by hearing it but by applying habit forming principles. The author strongly encourages

the membership to: First, bring their personal copy of the Bible to services (Pew Bibles are good to facilitate visitors, but the Christian soldier must have his own sword).

Second, take notes and jot down personal thoughts in a journal. Third, look for key words, ideas, or phrases in the text. And, fourth, associate stories and see parallels for amplification or confirmation between the Old and New Testaments.

The second ministry priority is to engage in the rebuilding of the destroyed sanctuary. Building with brick and mortar is not a strength of the writer. The only inspiration the author can draw on is the refurbishing, renovation, and expansion of the decayed building structure of the Guyana Bible College (GBC) in 1981 to 1983. The infrastructure was left unattended and abandoned. As the Principal of GBC the author was involved in the planning, financing and in executing plans to re-establish that institution. With the author's little knowledge to draw upon, regarding what it takes to engage in a building project. He was led to believe that God never wastes our energy of past experiences just as he used Moses' wilderness experiences and shepherding "detour experiences" forty years later to take Israel through that same wilderness, "Moses's neighborhood."

The circumstances at Trinity have required the author to spearhead the "rebuilding of the wall" of this particular Zion. The author organized a local demolishing work group to removing the rubbish. This effort saved thousands of dollars that a removal company would charge. This was accomplished in a very safe and timely manner. A capital fundraising initiative was established very early called, the Trinity Nehemiah Rebuilding Fund. The members were kept fully informed and involved on all meetings and the progress that consultation with engineers and contractors were taking

place. Trinity is exploring the kind of structure (wood, concrete, brick or metal) it wants and can afford; the size and seating capacity with pews or chairs, and what additional space is needed for sound/recording room, classrooms and so forth. The foundation can be a level slab or a raised foundation.

With the mortgage and all past incurred expenses satisfied, Trinity engaged a financial consulting company to negotiate a manageable loan with various banks that the current congregation could repay over a twenty to twenty-five year period. This required an extensive research of the Trinity's past indebtedness, payment history, and current expenditure and income. There were four (4) banks that offered affordable loans with reasonable interest rates, length of term, and fees. The congregation met and decided on the offer that best fit the church's financial status. Trinity is currently exploring two additional components towards completing its rebuilding prerequisites with a reasonable, reputable, verified, and bonded contractor, and with an attorney that handles contracts and deeds. The entire package will be voted on by Trinity membership then presented to the AMEC Columbia Annual Conference Board of trustees for final approval. This has been a new learning experience which the author will treasure and possibly use in other settings as a pastor/builder or as a consultant for other congregations.

The third priority that the author has stirring up within, is fermenting and building an excited evangelistic team to reach beyond immediate family members of the Trinity congregation. Some initial attempts have been made to organize a few groups to visit in the community, but they were not successful for a lack of consistency and volunteers. The author personally walked the streets and knocked on doors to demonstrate this and for the group to look for opportunities to invite, pray, or present a gospel witness. There



is an effort to recommit and try again with some additional seasons of prayer and training. Various housing schemes and an apartment complex have been identified for these additional efforts. In addition, there is an overseas evangelistic and teaching initiative that Trinity has supported over the years in conjunction with home evangelism.

The second ministry context is an evangelistic/teaching ministry in Jamaica and the Caribbean islands that the writer has. The Jamaican roots commenced in 1973 as a Bible College student at Fairview Baptist Bible College (FBBC) in Western Jamaica. Jamaica has become his adopted home since August 1973 after leaving Guyana for Bible College. The writer returned to Guyana for a brief ministry after spending over 8 years in Jamaica. The FBBC is located approximately eighteen miles from Montego Bay, Jamaica's second major city and its most vibrant tourist destination for sun worshippers and vacationers. Before and after graduation in 1977, the writer pastored a few Independent Baptist Churches in the parishes of St. Elizabeth, Clarendon, and Kingston (the capitol). The Independent Baptist Church (IBC) organization is a loosely affiliated group called a Fellowship of Baptist Churches. Each church possesses a threefold Polity of "Self- Determination," "Self-Sufficiency," and "Self-Propagation." The IBC uses the language of "Fellowship" and "Association" to describe its affiliation with other congregations of similar faith and practice. This is unlike the Southern Baptist Convention or the Black Baptist Convention where denominational traditions and connections are foundational. The college that the writer attended and graduated from was founded by Baptist Mid-Missions of America in conjunction with the IBC of Jamaica. Both FBBC and IBC shared a conservative statement of faith and belief. The writer held a two-year teaching contract with FBBC, lecturing in Bible

Doctrines/Theology, Church History, Evangelism, Pedagogy, Homiletics, and Bible Survey. During the two-year teaching experience, the writer taught several young men and women. Several of the men currently serve in local churches, and some of the women are employed as teachers and nurses.

During his eight and one half years in Jamaica, the author formed intimate and lasting friendships and associations with pastors, institutions, and churches that have served as points for reaching back to Jamaica to conduct ministry. Contact has been kept with some of the pastors that the writer taught at FBBC and others the writer has become acquainted with through several return trips to Jamaica. In 2013 at the fiftieth anniversary celebration for FBBC, the writer gave a presentation to the week-long Conference leading up to graduation on the topic of Theological Education after Graduation. Using 2 Kings 4, the writer shared the mentorship that Elijah provided to the School of prophets at four locations, but only one student – Elisha diligently and persistently followed on and punctiliously pursued his master regardless of criticisms or cynicism, inheriting a double portion and went on to perform “double of the miracles” of Elijah, and thereby entered the pages of Scriptures whereas the other students are not even mentioned.

In 2014, the writer returned to Jamaica and conducted a three- day revival at the invitation of the local pastor of Newtown Baptist Church in Clarendon, Jamaica. The pastor graduated from FBBC in 2009. The writer’s first contact with Pastor David was brief with only an exchange of phone numbers in 2013. It was only later that he mentioned that they had met earlier when the writer pastored the Gravel Ground Baptist Church (GGBC) in Clarendon, Jamaica, during the late 70’s and that the writer attended a funeral service of a GGBC family in Buff Bay, another part of Jamaica where he was

living. After graduating from FBBC, Pastor David went on to become the pastor at the GGBC, that the writer pastored years before and Newtown Baptist Church. Newtown was a daughter church of GGBC. During the writer's ministry, the Newtown community was a feeding area to GGBC and it was the expressed desire of one of the deacons from Newtown to start a church in his growing community.

This Revival that the writer attended in 2014 entailed preaching on two Sunday mornings and evening services and Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evening services. A friend and ministry associate, Pastor James, and the writer were also available for counseling and prayer throughout regular daytime hours. Pastor James was a 1978 graduate of FBBC who currently resides in Connecticut, and had pastored GGBC after the writer. Pastor James partnered with this writer for this revival/evangelistic trip in 2014. We made several contacts and visits that the local pastor scheduled which resulted in at least two conversions and confession of faith in Christ as Savior. We reconnected with some of the same old acquaintances. We encouraged and prayed with a few who stopped attending church.

It was during this trip to Newtown Baptist Church that the writer met the young teenager, Tia who missed school because of experiencing economic hardships. Early on the morning before the revival was to commence the pastor received a telephone call from a member whose husband just died that morning. During the home visit, the happenstance meeting with Tia occurred. This encounter sparked an interest in hoping to make a contribution to a teenage. The author has since partnered with Pastor David and his congregation to financially support Tia. She started attending church regularly. Tia accepted the Lord as her personal Savior and was baptized. As a member of the church,

she participates in the choir, participated in inter-church bible quiz competitions, and attended a Christian youth camp. Tia attends school, receives additional afterschool instruction, and is registered for exams that will help place her in a promising college and on a productive career path. Tia epitomizes what a true investment in the Kingdom of God should look like.

In the summer of 2017, an Introduction to New Testament Greek, was arranged by two pastor-friends from the Caribbean Island of Grenada that was offered free to all participants. The two pastors graduated from FBBC in 1976 and 1977. All course materials, books, prizes and an overhead projector were sponsored by Trinity and interested friends in the USA. The primary New Testament Greek instruction to a consistent class of twenty-five students over six days and evenings was taught by Dr. Mike F, Ph.D. The class was made up of a cross section of lay persons and pastors, both male and female from various denominations. There was a feedback fellowship session on the seventh day where students expressed gratitude for a unique exposure to and taste of koine Greek. There is an interest in future ministry to conduct similar intensives into others not so easily accessible and biblical courses as the local need demands.

### **Ministry Journey**

Looking back on his Christian life experience, the author was very excited about the new-found joy of salvation and forgiveness of sins that commenced at the age of fourteen. The author seriously and passionately engaged in inviting people in the community from Hindu, Muslim, and nominal Christian backgrounds to a born-again experience. Though young and inexperienced in the faith, the author felt a bit of what the

woman of Samaria tasted, “Come see a man that told me all things; is not this, the Christ, the Savior of the world?” The writer, generally an introvert and not talkative; not easily engaging in conversations, found a confidence and easiness when talking to strangers about Jesus. This evangelistic enthusiasm was drawn out by my mentor (Basedo S.) when the author visited several churches and communities outside of Georgetown, Guyana with him. The open-air street meetings, the tract and literature distribution, the modeling of this exceptional and fearless mentor, and interaction with people on a personal level were foundational, transformative and unforgettable to him. The writer sensed that gifts, passions and skills were forming very deep channels in making an indelible impression of what ministry would look like.

Soon after conversion, the writer became a serious student of the Bible; reading it, taking lots of correspondence courses, and memorizing key verses. The writer never read or owned a Bible before conversion; so, when a Bible was gifted by two Christian mothers, Sister Persaud and Sister Chin, it was greatly prized, cherished, and read daily. The writer took every opportunity to study the Scriptures from that moment. That intense desire for the word of God led the writer to attend a small group Bible study. The writer’s mentor conducted this in-depth Tuesday night Bible study in the neighborhood which laid the strong biblical foundation for Bible College in Guyana and Jamaica.

While at Fairview Baptist Bible College, the writer became more keenly aware of a self-giftedness and calling to a Bible teaching career. This awareness is anchored in the Great Commission of Jesus in Matthew 28, and Paul’s instruction to Timothy to “commit to faithful who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). The writer was fascinated and fell in love with the expository and textual preaching/teaching style. The

confirmation of his ministry skills, interests, and gifts in teaching the Bible came in 1978 at the age of 23 while the writer pastored Cheltenham Baptist Church, St. Elizabeth, Jamaica. George Birch and his wife Alice (both now deceased) approached the writer about returning to FBBC as an instructor. Mr. Birch, as the President, Chief Administrator and instructor at FBBC employed the writer to a two-year contract teaching position in August 1978. This launched the writer's teaching career and passion to effectively communicate the Word of God in the church and in teaching institutions.

This teaching gift was highlighted again on returning to Guyana, his home country. The writer was invited to pastor Kitty Baptist Church (KBC) in Georgetown. However, the writer's spiritual father and mentor, Basdeo S., challenged the writer on behalf of the College Board of Trustees, to reorganize, renovate, and reopen the defunct and dilapidated Guyana Bible College (GBC). This was sensed as an opportunity because there was absolutely nothing to work with – no staff, no students, no library, no working facility, and no finances. This was a start from scratch situation where the only way to go was up. This is a moment to reflect on the Scripture "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain." The physical facility was completely renovated and expanded, the library was refurbished and functioning, the financial arrears and taxes were paid up, and a re-invigorated academic program was established with limited advertising and recruiting efforts in the newspapers and churches. The teaching staff gladly volunteered their time and skills because they were excited to witness the resurrection of the college which played a meaningful role in their theological training. There was no financial remuneration for the staff or this writer as the principal, teacher, and caretaker. This situation enabled this writer to stretch beyond my limits of faith, and ability and to

experience God's provision in the wilderness. This project expanded his ministry beyond the pastoral and academic world into building and construction, advertising and recruitment, and fundraiser and administration. The first two students to enroll, Mark A. and Vibert G., to enroll after the renovation of GBC were converts through the writer's pastoral ministry at KBC. To this day, Vibert remains as a "son" to me and a vital connection to Guyana. After his departure from Guyana, Vibert succeeded me becoming the pastor of KBC after his graduation from GBC.

After moving to New York (USA), the writer founded the Summer Haven Bible Camp (SHBC) in 1985 in the Lighthouse Baptist Church. This church was founded by a fellow graduate from FBBC with the intent of providing a community for Caribbean Christians in Brooklyn. The SHBC was a week away from the city life to the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania. The intent was the evangelism of youths and instilling Christian values that would contribute to church growth. It was an exciting ministry of teaching, counseling, and evangelizing youths coming mostly from the Caribbean Islands. This project has evidenced its blessing and intentionality in the equipping of Christian workers for witnessing to campers and fostering the disciplines of discipleship such as consistent church attendance, daily prayer, and Bible reading and faithfully boldly sharing their conversion experience and faith with others. Campers found a savior, developed a respect for leadership and parents, and for healthy sportsmanship and competition. SHBC allowed the campers to see that Christianity has a face, a helping hand, and a personal living relationship in the flesh where hypocrisy and insincerity either come to light and or is dealt with openly and honestly.

After moving to South Carolina in 1992, the Summer Haven Bible Camp formula was replicated at two other African Methodist Episcopal Churches (St. Paul and Taylor Chapel) in Columbia. Each experience was well received, and the writer encouraged it to be a model at the local level to attract youths and be an evangelistic outreach tool in the summer. Some members never attended a Bible camp sleeping in outdoor tents, with an intensive Bible curriculum and daily competitive sport activities. These camp initiatives did not survive after the writer left those churches even though they had been organized with a small enthusiastic core group in each church to keep it going.

Similarly, in Young's Chapel AME Church, the writer organized and conducted an evangelism seminar. The seminar used a thirty-two page manual that the writer compiled and an invited dynamic speaker, Peter G., who exemplified the personal touch and dynamism needed in witnessing for the Lord. The writer shared that the congregation cannot be a stagnant reservoir which takes in but does not give out but rather a conduit that remains open, fresh, and living because no hoarding is allowed. The manual that the author compiled, *Evangelism is Our Watchword*, addressed issues related to evangelism including the definition of evangelism, qualifications of the witness, incentives for evangelism (II Corinthians 5), advantages of personal evangelism, the use of literature as tools of evangelism, and dealing with some common questions and concerns that confront the soul winner/witness.

In November 2013, the author arrived at Trinity AME Church in Newberry, South Carolina. The author's vision for the congregation's sustained future for the next generation was expressed in evangelistic term. The church is the light to provide guidance and the salt to preserve godliness, and to follow Christ who said, "As the Father



sent me so send I you.” The writer wanted to reach into their fervent adherence to the local life and events of the church, to discover and challenge their giftedness, and their involvement as they coalesce to make church life and programs effective. The author vividly and somewhat humorously recalled the sort of obligation and solidarity that Trinity exemplifies and demonstrates repeatedly in his ministry. He recalls a recent event when several members of the congregation in about seventeen cars accompanied and escorted the writer to a revival speaking engagement. A leading steward or deacon who said he knew the way was leading this procession. He was lost and for about forty minutes. He kept turning here and there until someone from the host church sent help. The group arrived so late at the host church that another preacher was asked to give the message. The biggest take away and blessing that day was that Trinity’s members in the seventeen-car convoy did not diminish.

No one complained or expressed frustration. No one turned back in disgust or defeat. The congregants displayed a serious commitment to the church, and to the support of its ministries.

The 2018 Summer Vacation Bible School at Trinity was spearheaded by Trinity’s Christian Education Director, Sherri S., who enlisted and paired young persons with adults for spearheading various activities such as fishing, lunch preparation and service, and games. The focus on the children and youth attracted many who participated in an early morning fishing expedition and by using the catch for a group fish fry. This attracted several new young people who seldom attend church. There was also fire prevention training, a demonstration of the life of a firefighter on duty at the station, and the attendees were given a hands on use of the water hose by the Newberry Fire

Department. Later in the evening the Bible lesson centered on Jesus's call of fishermen to discipleship (Luke 5). The experienced fishermen who fished all night and caught nothing were told to let down their nets for a miraculous catch at the ridiculous command and direction of Jesus who had never been a fisherman and who had been merely walking on the shore. In addition, the Police Chief of the Town Law Enforcement Center, dialogued with the participants on fraudulent schemes and their prevention, identity theft and protection, and other personal and community crime prevention programs. Meals and games were added incentives and attractions.

### **Development of Synergy: Merging of Gifts, Opportunity and Ministry**

The emergence, intersecting, and merging of the various threads of the writer's spiritual life's journey are characterized by three strands. First, the author discovered that the ministry gifts took shape early, gradually developing as the writer was offered opportunities to do ministry and as the writer was open to being critiqued by concerned spiritual elders. Second, confidence increased as the writer publicly shared testimonies, struggles, and temptations in the Christian journey. Third, affirmation and confirmation of the author's calling to the three-fold ministry of Personal Evangelism, a theological platform (Bible Education), and social compassion component (Encouragement) were welcomed as signs that produced a sense of peace and an assurance in the writer's heart.

The topic that the writer would like to explore as the Doctor of Ministry Project is, "The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Education Outreach Ministry Bridge to the Caribbean." The chosen Biblical foundational text for this project is Acts 16: 9-10.

During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.'

When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.<sup>1</sup>

This text details several fascinating ideas that relate to the ministry project of evangelism and its phenomenal success and Theological education as the Apostle Paul witnessed to a group of proselyte women gathered for prayer at the seaside. First, a woman named Lydia was Europe's first convert, and whose conversion led to the introduction of the Gospel to Europe. It did not take long for opposition to Paul and his gospel of Christ to rise up. That satanic opposition came from daily harassment by a demented demon-possessed slave-girl who followed Paul around the city. William Barclay asserts,

If Lydia came from the top of the social scale, this slave girl came from the bottom. She was what was called a Pytho, that is a person who could give oracles to guide men about the future. She was mad and the ancient world had a strange respect for mad people because, they said, the gods had taken away their wits in order to put the mind of the gods into them. She was probably also gifted with a natural turn for ventriloquism.<sup>2</sup>

Second, Paul rebuked the demon and released this doubly enslaved servant. This exorcism deprived the unscrupulous merchants of Philippi of their commercial interests and gains from this unfortunate slave-girl. This liberating action of Paul for the slave-girl deprived the merchants of their revenue resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of Paul and his fellow companion, Silas.

The third evangelistic incident in Acts 16 following the conversion of Lydia, and the liberation of the demon-possessed slave-girl is the conversion of the Philippian Jailer

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 16:9-10, NRSV.

<sup>2</sup> William Barclay, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Revised Edition, The Daily Study Bible Series (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1976). 124.

and his household. The Macedonia Call resulted in the demonstration of the power of God in dramatically transforming lives. The focus of my project is using every opportunity as Paul did for evangelizing, discipling, and providing theological training. The focus will be on those ideas and others that are imbedded in this story of the Macedonia Call.

The convergence of Biblical Education and Evangelism played significant roles in the writer's ministry in Guyana, Grenada, Jamaica and the United States. Throughout the forty-one years since his conversion, the writer has had countless interactions and discussions with church leaders, and close up observations of churches and leaders that have informed his assessment of the urgent need for an intentional strategy infused with a passionate persuasion to witness for Christ, and simultaneously provide a sound biblical education. There is a blight of biblical illiteracy that fills many pulpits, and this has pervaded many congregations. The Old Testament prophets, Amos and Hosea, proclaimed a prophetic message that is much needed in the contemporary church. They wrote, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the Words of the Lord," (Amos 8:11). Hosea lamented, "My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6).

Emotionalism, the gift of rhetoric, and a deep bass baritone singing and speaking voice is accepted as the main qualifications for preaching. One often hears the comment, "Did he not preach?" after many such services even though the text and context of Scripture were not explained or proclaimed. The writer also finds that those who could have an influence on this type of preaching do not intervene. They fail to perform

immediate and aggressive “Intensive Care” intervention because they do not “want to hurt the pastor/preacher’s feelings.” So, the ministry suffers, and pews remain stagnant, lukewarm, or even dead (Revelations 3). The writer has an intensity that propels to helping address the scourge wherever and whenever the writer gets an opportunity to engage in personal witnessing or to teach techniques as outlined in the manual that the writer organized and formatted for this purpose. The writer is personally excited to teach or arrange for others that were well qualified and informed to lecture on a variety of subjects that fit the perceived and genuine needs of Caribbean churches and institutions.

The writer’s expectations are to assist the Fairview Baptist Bible College (FBBC), denominations and fellowships, and individual congregations with a strategic plan for localized implementation. This will be drawn from a need assessment as determined by leaders and churches. Assistance can be available, for example, to FBBC in its search for Theological Accreditation which will enhance its attraction for students; the increase of its student body population from churches across Jamaica and the Caribbean; the development of additional curriculum to meet current and anticipated ministry situations, and the rebuilding, refurbishing, and repairing the physical facilities that will create a physical attraction to the campus.

The writer hopes that through the Doctor of Ministry that he will engage in a serious refining of the ministry project that he envisioned will be used to address the serious deficit and need that he has felt in his heart for Trinity and the Caribbean. Additionally, he hopes to develop a keener sense of awareness after sharing and debating this subject with his Doctor of ministry colleagues and mentors in the Prophetic Preaching and Praxis program. He seeks counsel and guidance with his mentors in the

formulation and implementation of a sustained plan that will fashion this project into a workable template for evangelism and teaching.

### **Conclusion**

It is the writer's sincere desire to "stir up" the dormant, undeveloped and undiscovered gifts of the church. This can be accomplished through systematic, passionate, and persuasively biblical and sound teaching via seminars, conferences, revivals and the use of other technological tools where possible. The writer will seek to work with partners overseas to make advance planning and arrangements of events, venues, and accommodations. There will be an assessment by the overseas yokefellows regarding the need of their local congregations and their communities. Consultation for additional ministry projects may be suggested, defined, and assigned.

In institutions of higher learning and pastoral leadership training, the task is to conduct intensives on current and pressing theological trends and social justice themes that affect the Caribbean churches and countries rather than what is happening in the United States. This task is to commit to faithful men and women who shall be able to teach others, also. This is an investment and multiplication ministry as the Apostle Paul invested in the life of Timothy, Titus, and countless others. What makes ministry meaningful, challenging, and exciting is watching God forming an invincible army to make the Church, the Bride and Body of Christ, triumphant. Paul, defending his apostleship and ministry against charges brought by the Corinthian Church, expressed without equivocation, the fact that he was ordained by the Risen Christ and was not behind the other apostles in gifts and graces. He stated that "I cannot help myself; it

would be misery to me not to preach the Gospel” and he continued to balance that out by saying, “I do it willingly, without expense to anyone” so as to receive an “incorruptible crown” (I Corinthians 9). This is the kind of burning passion that the writer wants to characterize in this ministry. Paul’s example motivates the writer to “strive for masteries,” “pressing forward” to evangelistic goals and theological education.

It is the writer’s fervent aspiration to continue to organize and sponsor mission trips to the Caribbean. Jamaica, Grenada, and Guyana are most familiar fields to the writer. The writer hopes to excite and create interested groups of stakeholders from the Trinity AME Church and missionary minded entities so that they may experience and witness firsthand the workings of God’s grace overseas and the effects and fruits of their partnership with churches and institutions beyond their local boundaries.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS**

#### **Introduction**

The writer's rich and varied background, skills and gifts, and passions resonate with this doctoral project of "The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Education Outreach Ministry-Bridge to the Caribbean." The text for this project is Acts 16:9-10 which reads, "During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, 'come over to Macedonia, and help us.' And when he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them."

The writer's trajectory into a passionate pastoral teaching and evangelistic ministry has its genesis, sustained energy and vigilance soon after his conversion from Hinduism in November 1969. What motivated the New Testament Church of God to leave Georgetown, the capital of Guyana, South America to and launch a new church initiative seven miles away in the rural community of Little Diamond, is still an enigma this writer. This inscrutability raised perplexing questions in his mind. Why the interest in establishing a gospel beachhead in Little Diamond? Who identified that area as a target for evangelism and church planting? Was the New Testament Church of God invited? If so, who invited it? And, who and what determined the timing to start an evangelistic campaign in November?



Little Diamond is a racially diverse, religiously mixed, middle to lower income neighborhood comprised of about twelve city blocks in size. Little Diamond and its adjoining community of Big Diamond are located around the Diamond Sugar Estate where sugar cane is harvested and processed into molasses and alcohol beverages. The majority of the population is employed by the Sugar Estate which is a prominent industry in the country. Guyana's sugar products are known and sold worldwide. This writer's grandfather was a career courier officer for the estate. His father worked at Diamond Estate from the age of fourteen, and then retired having had a long career as a large machine operator.

The Gospel team or workers that came from Georgetown was just as diverse as Little Diamond's population. The group's composition consisted of an East Indian pastor and his wife, Mohammed, who were converts to Christianity from Islam. In addition, Mr. Stapleton was an African evangelist and designated soloist. There was Sister Persaud, a female East Indian convert from Hinduism, and a female Chinese convert, named Chin. Those five spirit led, mature and loving leaders impressed Christ's love and care for a lost community that needed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The writer's first bible was gift from this devoted group.

Later, the author became acquainted with Basdeo Singh (deceased), who was a convert from Hinduism at the age of twenty-one. Basdeo became his mentor and spiritual father. Rev Singh introduced, inspired and instilled a thirst for deep abiding interest in systemic bible reading, research in homiletics and hermeneutics, and an inductive and analytical study of the Bible. He taught, modelled, and exemplified a self-sacrificing life of dedicated Christian service. As a lecturer and a member of the Board

of Governors at Guyana Bible College (GBC), he enrolled the writer in the college and paid all the fees for at least two years. He taught him the disciplines of the Christian faith such as self-sacrifice, prayer, generosity, and team-work among others things.

After graduating from GBC, this author continued his education at Fairview Baptist Bible College (FBBC) in Jamaica, West Indies, where he graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Bible and Pastoral Studies. He was a student-pastor for most of the four years at FBBC. The next four and a half years after graduation were spent teaching in a secular setting at Wolmer's Preparatory School in Kingston, Jamaica, lecturing in Bible at Fairview Baptist Bible College, and pastoring several Baptist churches. Later, this writer returned to Guyana and served as the President/Principal of Guyana Bible College while also pastoring Kitty Baptist Church in Georgetown.

Before moving to South Carolina in 1992, the writer served as an associated pastor at Grace Baptist Church, Sufferin, New York, and at Lighthouse Baptist Church (LBC) in Brooklyn, N.Y. At LBC he felt the burden for young people in the church who did not have an organized Christian based activity during the summer. He was led in starting a week-long intensive Bible camp for the Lighthouse churches in Tri-borough counties of New York, Brooklyn, Bronx and Queens. A camp site in the Poconos Mountain of Reading, Pennsylvania secured. The Summer Haven Bible Camp (SHBC) was established in 1985 and continues to serve as an ongoing ministry of reaching youths and children with the Gospel and to instruct them in a Christian worldview and social ethics. These Christian ministries impacted his life, influenced his values, and poured into him an unmistakable and ongoing passion for pastoral, evangelistic and education

ministries wherever and whenever an opportunity presents itself. This unabated passion continues to this day where this writer lives in the United States.

Since moving to South Carolina, this writer has provided pastoral leadership to several churches for over twenty–five years in African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC). Currently, he is the pastor at Trinity AME Church located in Newberry, South Carolina. In addition, this writer continues to invest myself in a dual context ministry of teaching, preaching, exhorting and training in the Caribbean. The writer’s call to Christian ministry is anchored and guided by the Great Commission given by Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20, and the Apostle Paul’s desire expressed in II Timothy 2:2. Paul wrote in II Timothy 2:2, “And what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others as well.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Literary Element of Text**

The book of Acts, the fifth book of the New Testament is sometimes called the fifth Gospel in that the author purports to present the good news “of all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen (appointed), He was taken up to heaven” (Acts 1:2). The author also recorded Jesus’ commission to evangelize the world saying: “but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will bear witness for me in Jerusalem, and all Judaea and Samaria, and away to the ends the earth” (Acts 1:8). The expositor G. Campbell Morgan wrote of Acts the “The book which we call Acts of the Apostles may be said to complete the Pentateuch of the New Testament

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<sup>1</sup> *New Revised Standard Version* of the Holy Bible (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007). Unless otherwise noted, all Bible references are from the NRSV.

History Four of these books present the Person of our Lord, while the fifth gives the first pages of the history of the Church.”<sup>2</sup> Morgan comments that the author of Acts reveal his Subject: The Word; gave the Source of his Information: Eyewitness and Ministers; Described his Method: Accurate tracing of the course of all things, writing them in order, and Declared the purpose: that of giving Certainty to Theophilus.”<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, echoes the Great Commission founded in Matthew 28 are heard in Acts. The book of Acts of the Apostles has also been notably, appropriately and accurately called the “Acts of the Holy Spirit”; that it records the activity of the Holy Spirit through the ministry and lives of the apostles in the first century. Acts as a historical document composed, between A.D. 60-62, records the birth, expansion of the New Testament Church from Jerusalem to the ends of the then known world.

In Acts 16, the Scripture selected as the foundation for this dissertation, there is peculiar and almost overlooked introduction of what commentators have called, the “we passages,” that continues from here through the rest of the book (16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 7:1-29; 28:1-16). There are three explanations given by scholars as to the author’s intent: 1. They represented the author’s eyewitness accounts; 2. The author used a source from one of Paul’s travelling companions; and 3. The author used a literary devise common in ancient travel narratives.<sup>4</sup> It appears that in Acts 16, Luke first join Paul at Troas as a travelling companion and the author, Luke, inserted himself into his

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<sup>2</sup> G. Campbell Morgan, *Acts of the Apostles* (New York, NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1960), 9.

<sup>3</sup> Morgan, *Acts of the Apostles*, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Martin M. Curly and Mikeal C. Parsons, *Acts: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003), 310.

manuscript as an active participant and firsthand witness to the events he described. The historically accepted consensus is the proposition that the author of both the Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles is Luke the beloved physician who personally accompanied Paul on his journey. F. S. Spencer from his article title “Structurally, Luke’s Gospel,” which claims that Luke provided an “episodic series of events punctuated by numerous aphorisms and parables of Jesus,” whereas Acts “unfolds more smoothly as a continuous narrative featuring extended journeys and developed discourse by Jesus’ followers.”<sup>5</sup> As church history, the material, content, form and function of Acts provide the hermeneutics of its message.

Luke, the Beloved Physician friend of Paul and researcher was also a historian, who uniquely gave an indispensable documentation of the spread of the Gospel from the narrow confines of the City of Jerusalem all the way to Rome (The Road to Rome), the very capital of the Roman Empire. It is the belief of F.F. Bruce that Luke deserved to be called “the first Christian apologist” stating:

The great age of Christian apologetic was the second century, but of the three main types of defense represented among the second century Christian apologists, Luke provides first-century prototypes: defense against pagan religion (Christianity is true; paganism is false), defense against Judaism (Christianity is the fulfillment of true Judaism), defense against political accusations (Christianity is innocent of any offense against Roman law).<sup>6</sup>

The history-story recorded in the Book of the Acts, covering approximately thirty years beginning with the Ascension (A.D. 33) to Paul’s two-year Roman house arrest (A.D. 62), is generally divided on the basis of its two main proponents and defenders:

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<sup>5</sup> F. Scott Spencer, *Acts* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 14.

<sup>6</sup> F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1990), 22.

Peter (Acts 1-12), and Paul (Acts 13-28). Among other persons, these two dominant personalities were engaged in advancing the gospel in preaching, teaching, sign miracles and church planting. Acts 1:8, considered the key verse of the book, provides the broad outline of the spread of Christianity, first to the Jews within Palestine and the diaspora throughout the Roman Empire, then to the Samaritans and lastly to the Gentiles world. Peter is generally seen as the apostle to the Jews, while Paul is considered the apostle to the Gentiles delivering the Gospel in their respective fields of ministry. Paul wrote in Galatians 1:7-8, “On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised (for He who worked through Peter making him an apostle to the circumcised also worked through me in sending me to the gentiles).”

### **Historical Setting of Acts 16**

The geographical setting of Acts 16 identifies a diverse ethnic population in Derbe and Lystra. This writer’s assessment and general reading is that Luke addressed the spread of the gospel as God worked out His purpose of building His Church and defending the Christian beliefs in a pagan world. There were the Greek with their language and customs, the Romans with their military and laws, and a minority Jewish population (not large enough to have their own synagogue) for the practice of their religion, traditions and the reading the Law of Moses. Acts 16 stated that Paul met and joined an all women gathering, probably all proselytes, on the Sabbath Day and sat down on the riverbanks for prayer. Paul was invited to speak to them and he worshipped with them. The town of Philippi also apparently had a slave and oppressed population as that

is evidenced by the demon possessed girl employed as a fortuneteller out of whom Paul exorcised the demon. It was in this setting that Paul and his companions became a transforming witness of the Lord Jesus Christ to the municipality with its small Jewish population, slaveholding merchants and city dwellers, and also to the city jailer who was converted with his household.

According to a general reading of the book of Acts, the life and ministry of Paul are traced by at least three missionary journeys where individuals, a band of co-workers and locations are mentioned. In these cities, souls are saved (15:3, 12), congregations are established (15:23), believers are strengthened in their faith (15:43; 16:5), and saints are exhorted and confirmed to accomplish their calling (15:32). It is in this second of three missionary journeys (15:36–18:22), that the leading apostle, Paul, had a bitter disagreement with his partner, Barnabas over taking young and inexperienced John Mark along on this journey. With a parting of their ways (15:39), Paul chose to take Silas, a prominent and established leader and a prophet of the church (15:22, 32) as his companion and fellow-laborer instead of Barnabas; and went on to visit Syria, Cilicia, Derbe, Lystra (where Timothy joined the group), Phrygia, Galatia, Mysia and Troas. Barnabas, his co-workers or his ministry are no longer heard from again in Scripture.

In this second missionary journey, Paul and his missionary partners were hindered and restrained from pursuing the venture of taking the Gospel to Asia and to Bithynia. In both instances the Holy Spirit essentially slammed the doors shut to the fields of labor in Asia and Bithynia. “With the doors to these areas closed, Paul’s team traveled to Troas, a coastal town. This city was about four miles from the site of ancient Troy and was a

transit harbor for those who crossed from Asia to Macedonia, or Greece.”<sup>7</sup> They, Paul and his team journeyed by ship and on foot for over 135 miles to Philippi, another port city located in Eastern Macedonia.<sup>8</sup>

The People’s New Testament Commentary noted that:

The city (of Philippi) had been rebuilt about 400 years before this (time) by Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, who named it after himself. It was famous as the place of the decisive battle (in 42 A. D.) between Brutus and Cassius on the one hand, and Mark Antony and Octavius, afterwards Augustus Cæsar, upon the other. As a Roman colony, Philippi was a settlement of Romans in a foreign country, possessing all the privileges of Roman citizenship. The colony had its own senate, its own magistrates, and observed all Roman forms. In essence it was a miniature vision of Rome. This colony had been established by Augustus Cæsar, who settled at this place a multitude of the partisans of his rival, Mark Antony, after Mark Anthony’s death.<sup>9</sup>

Richard Longenecker in *The Expositors Bible Commentary* wrote that Philippi’s fame and significance was considerable to such an extent that it was called a “transplanted Rome.” There were fewer taxes and Roman military veterans’ presence and Rome’s sympathizers served the primary purpose of defense and show of strength. They settled in strategic locations. Philippi was also famous for its agriculture, its strategic commercial location by the sea ports and land routes, it is still functioning gold mines, and its status as a Roman colony. In addition, it has a famous school of medicine with graduates throughout the then-known world.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> M. Eugene Boring and Fred B. Craddock, *People’s New Testament Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 486.

<sup>8</sup> Boring and Craddock, *People’s New Testament Commentary*, 486.

<sup>9</sup> Boring and Craddock, *People’s New Testament Commentary*, 486.

<sup>10</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, “The Acts of the Apostles,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, vol. 9, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), 459-460.



Macedonia proper lies just to the north of the Ægean Sea, a few hours sailing time from Troas. This ancient kingdom, under Philip and Alexander, had first absorbed all Greece, then conquered Persia and spread the Grecian language and customs over all western Asia. In turn Macedonia had fallen before the Romans and was now a Roman province. It (the Province) had a number of large cities, with Thessalonica serving as the Roman Provincial capital.<sup>11</sup> Rome divided Macedonia into four districts, each with its own local government with Philippi as the leading city of that district.<sup>12</sup>

Thyatira, afterwards where one of the seven churches of Asia was located and to whom the Apostle John sent a letter in the book of Revelation, was beyond the Ægean Sea, hundreds of miles away. It was a bordered town with Lydia, which was famous for its purple dye. Thyatira was a Macedonian colony with a Greek and Roman population and influence.<sup>13</sup>

F. F. Bruce points out that Christianity reached Macedonia less than twenty years after the death of Christ. One of the earliest New Testament documents, Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, was probably written late in A. D. 50, to the Christian community in Thessalonica, the principal city of Roman Macedonia. It appears from the contents of the letter that the Christian church community owed its existence as such to a visit which Paul had paid to the city not long before he wrote it. Paul's visit had been preceded by his visit to Philippi, where he had been "shamefully treated" (I Thessalonians 2:2). When Paul initially set out with Silas, (called Silvanus in 1 and 2 Thessalonians) to cross Asia

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<sup>11</sup> Boring and Craddock, *People's New Testament Commentary*, 486.

<sup>12</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Acts* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1990), 262.

<sup>13</sup> Boring and Craddock, *People's New Testament Commentary*, 486.

Minor, the Cilician Gates westward, and after the Council of Jerusalem, Macedonia played no part in their planned itinerary.<sup>14</sup> As wonderful as a discussion of the geography is, “The geographical scheme is certainly not the dominant motif in this section: the Divine leading is.”<sup>15</sup>

This Gospel explosion and invasion into Europe was establishing a strong foothold there. It is like the “shot heard around the world.” Now the Christian message will have worldwide impact hereafter. All Europe became vulnerable to the march of Christian Soldiers because Paul’s arrival with a gospel message was advancing and transformative. The conquering of the Roman Empire and eventually all Europe will have worldwide missionary impact. God began His global and everlasting kingdom push into Macedonia by the peaceful conversion of a woman on seashore in contrast with the violent Alexander the Great whose conquests dissolved after his death at the age of 33. God had a plan yet unrevealed, mysterious but predicted. Eventually Paul will bear witness before kings and gentiles as the Gospel and God’s kingdom advances (Acts 9:15; 22:21; 25:11; 26:16). Europe was calling. Harrison wrote:

Alexander had moved from West to East to conquer brilliantly and infuse the Levant with everything Greek. Now a converted Jew was moving in the opposite direction, from Asia to Europe, to conquer for Christ.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> F. F. Bruce, “St. Paul in Macedonia,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 61, no 2 (Spring 1979): 337-354, <https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/uk-ac-man-scw:1m1814>.

<sup>15</sup> David G. Peterson. “Acts of the Apostles” in *Pillar New Testament Commentary in Fifteen Volumes* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 454.

<sup>16</sup> Everett F. Harrison, *Acts: The Expanding Church* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1975), 249.

In the *Concordia Commentary on Acts*, Robert Smith wrote:

Helen had a face that launched a thousand ships from Greece to Troy. The man from Macedonia launched a movement in the opposite direction. Both changed the course of history.<sup>17</sup>

### **Cultural and Social Setting**

The Apostle Paul was moved to grief and a kind of spiritual angst as he daily observed the pagan idolatrous practices of the city of Philippi. He saw the enormous temple architecture, attractive design, and the beauty of the statues dedicated to their deities. The advancement of Greek language, wisdom and culture with its refinements affected Paul's assessment that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength (I Corinthians 1:20c–21; 25).

Despite the Rome Empire's dominance with its wealth, display of extravagance, and exercise of raw power, it was the best values that were found in conquered territories and openly displayed an inclusiveness that profited the empire function and governance in its various parts without too much factions and breakaways. One writer stated:

The importation of works of art and art workers no doubt stimulated the growth of native talent, and in architecture at least the Romans developed an originality of the most valuable sort, the power to combine anew and adapt to their own purposes already existing types. Rome in the first century was no doubt a parvenu still, with more wealth than taste, fond of extravagant display, yet shrewd enough to value the culture of others, and

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<sup>17</sup> Robert H. Smith, *Concordia Commentary: Acts* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1970), 244.

to utilize it in building a capital fitted to express her military and political supremacy.<sup>18</sup>

Burton is again quoted about the existence, practices, restrictions and persecutions of religions and religious societies and eclectic groups. This includes Judaism and Christianity.

Religion still exercised a certain restraining influence, but religion and morality were by no means so closely united in pagan as in Christian thought. The Roman religion was originally a form of nature worship, whose gods were personifications of physical forces, and whose rites were a simple expression of awe and gratitude and desire for divine favor. But at the Christian era it had become, on the doctrinal side, a mass of petty superstitions, and on the formal side, an endless round of trivial observances. The number of gods, great and small, was almost infinite. Every locality, every event, every act had its special divinity. Ancestor worship was practiced in every household, and the spirit or “genius” of each individual was conceived as a divine being distinguishable in some vague way from himself. Worship of the emperors was an outgrowth of ancestor worship, for it was limited at first to deceased rulers, but was soon extended to the living, and became the chief expression and supreme test of political loyalty. Foreign religions were tolerated and even patronized, unless they were thought to be politically dangerous. Temples were erected to Egyptian deities, and were frequented by Roman worshipers. The Jewish Sabbath was well known in Rome, and was observed by others than Hebrews.<sup>19</sup>

The apostle Paul was a master at making a connection using the pagan religions and philosophies as he contrast the monotheism and uniqueness of Christianity. On Mar’s Hill, for example, Paul said “For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the object of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you,” (Acts 17:23). Paul launched into presentation of the God who made heaven and earth, and of

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<sup>18</sup> Henry F. Burton., *Rome in Paul’s Day* (Chicago, IL: University Press, 1894), 91.

<sup>19</sup> Burton, *Rome in Paul’s Day*, 94-95.

Christ the Lord, who died and rose again from the dead, and he is the final Judge of all mankind. In reading the journeys and church planting ministry of Paul in various locations as documented in Acts, Burton observes “with peace had come the revival of religious ceremonies, increased cultivation of literature, new commercial activity, and an enormous development of all forms of public amusement. The political life of Rome was now the life of the court.”<sup>20</sup>

Burton also addressed and commented on the home and family life of the general populace of the Roman Empire, underscoring that marriage was usually a matter of convenience, and divorce was easily obtained (even though women were held in high esteem), and children were given the best chance to succeed educationally.

Rome adapted to its situation both in terms of inland trade and commerce by sea. Its business success and wealth kept pace with its political growth. Its coinage, banking and exchange, joint stock companies, postal communication, and extensive (though not rapid) means of transportation all expressed the economic might and vastness of the empire’s reach.<sup>21</sup>

In the empire, all kinds of religions, status, and practices, were allowed. Roman Christians were numerous so much so that it attracted the attention of, and then was attacked by Emperor Nero and others. Christians were perceived as being different from Judaism, comprised mostly from people from the lower classes and foreigners. Christians were generally recognized by their virtuous lives and their protest against idol worship.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Burton, *Rome in Paul’s Day*, 91.

<sup>21</sup> Burton, *Rome in Paul’s Day*, 92.

<sup>22</sup> Burton, *Rome in Paul’s Day*, 95.

The early church functioned and was received as “a branch” of Judaism in that they were Jewish in culture, scripture and community gathering. Commenting on that Jewish tradition, Longenecker stated that in Acts 16, Paul circumcised Timothy whose Grecian father’s culture of non-circumcision prevailed over Timothy’s mother Jewish cultural practice of Circumcision. However, in Judaism the children’s religion proceeds from the mother’s faith (but the Philippi’s Jewish community was perhaps weak, small or non-influential to follow the mother’s religious laws, practices and traditions).<sup>23</sup> Why were they (Jews) not ostracized or persecuted? It was due to the principle of tolerance by Greco-Roman world for their worship of other gods –as long as treason was not suspected.

As stated earlier there was no synagogue community at Philippi because the minimum requirement for a synagogue was 10 Jewish male. So, women (and Lydia a business person) who were Jewish or converts to Judaism (proselytes) gathered at the river banks for worship and prayer. Since Jewish males were present, but Paul and his male companions did not refrain from associating with the women who were not their wives. Jesus’ disciples marveled, yet kept quiet, when He spoke with the Samaritan woman at Sychar’s well in John 4. It was considered taboo for Jesus to talk with a woman who was not only a stranger, but a Samaritan and a sinner as well. Paul imitated his Master and defied enslaving traditions of men in order to reach others with the good news.

Other women are the mentioned besides Lydia in Acts 16. Lydia was distinguished by her employment status as business owner, a Jewish proselyte attending a

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<sup>23</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, “*The Acts of the Apostles*,” in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, vol. 9, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), 455.

prayer service, and a Christian convert. In contrast to Lydia, there was slave “girl” whose religious background nor wealth or piety was not mentioned. She is described as one was under the spell of witchcraft, divination, and demonic possession. She was used in a commercial enterprise to garner wealth for her employers who seemed politically well connected. It would seem that the practice of witchcraft was prevalent, accepted and legal.

Some other features of the text of Acts 16 are the mention of city magistrates, the town’s trade people (union) such as merchants, and the jailer who risked suicide if his celebrated prisoners escape. There appears to be coordination and collaboration among the various sectors in the community as business interests and political forces forge for peace and safety by imprisoning outsiders and agitators. The danger of losing prisoners was immense. Should one’s prisoners escape, the jailer jeopardizes his career, status and possibly his life.

What is peculiar, appealing and captivating about Acts 16 is the way the invitation to preach is documented by Luke. The narrative shows how the events navigated into the birthing of a new Christian community in a pagan environment. This authenticates the narrative and lends legitimacy to the establishment of Christianity in the region of Macedonia.

### **Major Themes in Acts 16**

An exhaustive reading of Acts 16:6-10 yielded some basic and far reaching themes. The first significant theme is the prominence of the Holy Spirit’s activity in the life and ministry of the early church. His leading, guidance and empowering are clearly

sought and demonstrated. In Troas Paul was directed by the Holy Spirit to enter Europe with the Gospel. This will positively have dramatic implications and intentionality for the worldwide spread of Christianity. It is through the Spirit's guidance that ministries commence and are sustained. The Holy Spirit "prohibition ministry" of Paul and his missionary companions from two specific fields of labor that they intended of pursuing is documented. This restraint and redirection that Paul and his group discerned are found in Acts 16:6, 7, and 10. Luke stated, "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they assayed (attempted) to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit allowed (suffered) them not." Johnson points out that, "because of the uncertainty and clumsiness of these geographical indicators, it is clear the Spirit of God blocked every direction sought by human initiative and left only an opening to Europe."<sup>24</sup> Everett

Harrison also notes:

It must have been frustrating to have such negative guidance, but the experience was profitable in so much as it reminded them that the Spirit was in charge of operations. Their hope of reaching Asia (Ephesus) had been dashed, followed by a rebuff to their efforts to reach important centers of population. But this did not mean that these areas were to be deprived of the Gospel testimony.<sup>25</sup>

McGarvey writes that "they were overruled by some controlling providence;" and "divine interference by which Paul and Silas were now being directed."<sup>26</sup> Hughes makes

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<sup>24</sup> Luke Timothy Johnson, "The Acts of the Apostles" in *Sacra Pagina New Testament Commentary Series in Eighteen Volumes*, vol. 5, ed. Daniel J. Harrington (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 286.

<sup>25</sup> Harrison, *Acts: The Expanding Church*, 247.

<sup>26</sup> J. W. McGarvey, *A Commentary on Acts of the Apostles* (Lexington, KY: Transylvania Printing and Publishing Co., 1872), 199-200.



the observation that Paul and his party were “driven west by closed doors . . . he faced driving cross currents and inscrutable difficulties.” And that the cause of these “roadblocks could be illness (Luke joined the team). God can use unhappy and perplexing failures to bring fresh purpose and direction to our lives.”<sup>27</sup>

The *Jamieson-Faussett-Brown Commentary* comments on the Acts 16 phrase, “suffered them not.” The expression probably means that:

(1) Europe was (not) ripe for the labors of this missionary party; and (2) other instruments were to be honored to establish the Gospel in the eastern regions of Asia Minor, especially the apostle Peter (see 1 Peter 1:1). By the end of the first century, as testified by Pliny the governor, Bithynia was filled with Christians. ‘This is the first time that the Holy Ghost is expressly spoken of as determining the course they were to follow in their efforts to evangelize the nations, and it was evidently designed to show that whereas hitherto the diffusion of the Gospel had been carried on in unbroken course, connected by natural points of junction, it was now to take a leap to which it could not be impelled but by an immediate and independent operation of the Spirit; and though primarily, this intimation of the Spirit was only negative, and referred but to the immediate neighborhood, we may certainly conclude that Paul took it for a sign that a new epoch was now to commence in his apostolic labors.’<sup>28</sup>

Luke then mentioned a positive and affirmative statement, “And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel unto them.” Permission, direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit are essential elements for effective evangelistic and church planting ministries. Joseph Extell writes that the words, “Assuredly gathered” means “concluding,” or “proving” (Acts 9:22). It also means “join together” (Colossians 2:2). In classical Greek it means to “bring together” as in “reconciling,” and “agreement.” In the

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<sup>27</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Acts: The Church Afire* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1996), 206.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Jamieson, Andrew Robert Fausset, and David Brown, *The Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1961), 1109.

LXX, which is the Greek Old Testament, it means “to instruct,” or “teach” (I Corinthians 2:16).<sup>29</sup> The point is that the apostles were sent. They did not determine their own path. Jesus said, “As my Father hath sent me, so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit” (John 20:21-22).

The second major theme is that of vision which is evident in Acts 16: 9 which states, “And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: there stood a man of Macedonia, beseeching him, and saying, ‘Come over into Macedonia, and help us.’” Howard Marshall notes, “How the Holy Spirit prevented the travelers from following their original plan is not known. Presumably by some inner compulsion is meant, or perhaps a prophetic utterance.”<sup>30</sup> Earlier in the book of Acts, one of the first deacons, Stephen, had a glimpse of the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God in heaven as he was stoned to death for his witness (7:55-56). Later in Acts 10, the Apostle Peter fell into a trance, saw the heavens open, saw a vision of a great sheet with all manner of unclean animals, and was told to kill and eat which he refused to do. Peter was “greatly puzzled about what to make of the vision” (10:17) . . . “while Peter was still thinking about the vision,” (10:19) the Spirit gave him instructions, and an interpretation of the vision. Revelation by vision is not new to the faith community, for even in the Old Testament, God showed his plans through vision and dreams to Joseph, Moses, Isaiah, Daniel and Ezekiel to name just a few.

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<sup>29</sup> H. D. M Spence and Joseph S. Exell, “Acts,” in *The Pulpit Commentary in Twenty-three Volumes*, vol. 18 (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), 28.

<sup>30</sup> I. Howard Marshall, “Acts: An Introduction and Commentary,” in *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries in Twenty Volumes*, vol. 5. ed. Leon L. Morris (Grand Rapid, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 262.

The third important theme in Luke's account of the Macedonia Call is "Pleading." The idea of "pleading" and "praying" is repeated sometimes in Acts 16. The three main stories in this passage validate this idea. The man in the night vision was beckoning Paul for help saying, "Come over to Macedonia and Help us," (16:9). The slave girl, who was possessed by an oracular spirit, is intensely crying out for help as she daily followed Paul, depressingly and publicly harassing him. She kept shouting, "These men are servants of the Supreme God and are declaring to you a way of salvation," (16:17). Then, the story of the jailer who was at the point of committing suicide, pleaded for guidance, "Masters, what must I do to be saved?" (16:30)

Conceptually, beseeching is a plaintive cry, a distressed yet piercing wail of one in dire need and distress. It was a persuasive appeal that is irresistible to the hearer. In the case of the call from the Macedonian, Paul's responsive was immediate and with urgency. The identity of the "man" in the vision has supplied fodder for speculation by renowned scholars and commentators. Some scholars think that the "man from Macedonia" refers to Luke himself who was a native of the area. Other scholars suggest Alexander the Great as that man issuing that invitation. But Harrison thinks that "The Macedonian was not a brother but a "certain man."<sup>31</sup> Harrison continues, "The word 'help' is nowhere else used in Acts or New Testament to mean collaboration in the Lord's work. It is doubtful Paul would be drawn to assist in a work already begun by his pioneering ministry."<sup>32</sup> Since Scripture did not identify this individual, the reader is left to draw his own conclusion and apply it as is reasonably sound and appropriate.

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<sup>31</sup> Harrison, *Acts: The Expanding Church*, 248.

<sup>32</sup> Harrison, *Acts: The Expanding Church*, 248.

Invoking appeals are seen throughout the Scriptures. In his distress, Job entreats God, “Hear I beseech thee” (Job 42:4). The Psalms are filled with numerous supplications and entreaties for a variety of needs. The Centurion petitions Jesus to heal his servant (Luke 7:3). Jesus petitions, “Father I prayed Thee, let this cup pass from me” ((Matthew 26:39). The Apostle Paul’s “desire and prayer” and unbearable burden for the Jewish nation is also an appeal, “Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved” (Romans 10:1). Paul continues that thought “I have great sorrow (heaviness) and unceasing anguish (constant sorrow) in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for my own people, my kindred according to the flesh” (Romans 9:2-3). So, in Acts 16, this intense appeal reached the ears of God, and mediated to his servant, Paul.

Jameison-Faussett-Brown makes the insightful comment of the call that came to Paul and his fellow companion:

There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us—Stretching his eye across the Ægean Sea, from Troas on the northeast, to the Macedonian hills, visible on the northwest, the apostle could hardly fail to think this is the destined scene of his future labors; and, if he retired to rest with this thought, he would be thoroughly prepared for the remarkable intimation of the divine will now to be given him. This visional Macedonian discovered himself by what he said. But it was a cry not of conscious *desire* for the Gospel, but of deep *need* of it and unconscious *preparedness* to receive it, not only in that region, but, we may well say, throughout all that western empire which the Macedonia might be said to represent. It was a virtual confession “that the highest splendor of heathendom, which we must recognize in the arts of Greece and in the polity and imperial power of Rome, had arrived at the end of all its resources. God had left the Gentile peoples to walk in their own ways (Acts 14:2). They had sought to gain salvation for themselves; but those who had carried it farthest along the paths of natural development were now pervaded by the feeling that all had indeed been vanity. This feeling is the simple, pure result of all the history of heathendom. And Israel, going along the way which God had marked out for him, had likewise arrived at his end. At last he is in a condition to realize his original vocation, by

becoming the guide who is to lead the Gentiles unto God, the only Author and Creator of man's redemption; and Paul is in truth the very person in whom this vocation of Israel is now a present divine reality, and to whom, by this nocturnal apparition of the Macedonian, the preparedness of the heathen world to receive the ministry of Israel towards the Gentiles is confirmed.<sup>33</sup>

A fourth and final thought developed in the Acts 16 is a “Called us to preach the Gospel” theme (Acts 16:10). The seller of purple, Lydia, attended to the things spoken (the preaching of the Gospel) by Paul (16:14). The merchants and employers of the slave girl accused Paul of “teaching customs which are contrary for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans” (16:21). The Jailer had “the word of the Lord” spoken to him and his family (16:32). In each instance, gospel preaching had irrevocable and transformative result. Paul asserts that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16; 10:8-17).

Indeed, Paul obeyed the call to deliver that good news that was badly needed in a decadent and corrupt pagan society that thrived on illusive satisfaction sought through pleasure, wealth, and power. The empty voices cry from the darkness of heathendom can still be heard by the Christian Church. But there are those who, like Paul, still are possessed and persuaded by visions to reach the untold millions who are still untold. The urgent response to carry the torchlight of truth, righteousness and liberty that the Gospel of Jesus Christ freely offers awaits the obedience of a messenger. Jesus admonishes, “The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into the harvest” (Luke 10:2). “Do not say, ‘four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The

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<sup>33</sup> Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *The Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary*, 1110.

reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together” (John 4:35-36). Never must the Church undertake the challenge of missionary enterprises, or any missionary endeavors without the right spirit, and absolute obedience to the vision, the call and the purpose of Christ. “Where there is no vision the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18).

### **Word Study**

Taking a closer look at Acts 16, certain key words or phrases are noteworthy. For example, a significant word deserving some attention as relates to ministry is “forbidden.” It means to prevent or restrain as opposed to giving permission or allowing. The importance of the word lies in the context of Christian service. Going to a field of service without God’s permission will end disastrously in frustration, failure and possible fruitless results. God’s sanction of a mission or movement will certainly experience his blessings, presence and approval. The mercenary prophet Balaam is a prime example of someone who was told by God not to accept an invitation by Balak, king of Moab to curse the children of Israel (Numbers 22-24). Incentivized by monetary gains Balaam proceeded in stubborn determination. Balaam said, “The Lord has refused to let me go with you” (22:13). Jehovah’s displeasure was evident by an angel with a sword blocking his path, threatening his life, and finally turning his message from cursing into blessing Israel (22: 22-35; 24: 10-14). The forbidding work of the Holy Spirit was a positive in that a wide open door for ministry was just awaiting Paul.

The next keyword in the text is “vision.” According to Easton’s Bible Dictionary, a vision is a “vivid apparition, not a dream (Luke 24:23; Acts 26:19; 2 Corinthians

12:1).”<sup>34</sup> Boring comments on the phrase, “a vision appeared” like Peter’s vision at Joppa, it was a revelation. Peter’s vision called him to labor in fields never before entered.<sup>35</sup> This vision came with “visual and audible elements.”<sup>36</sup> It is unmistakably the same with Paul. The audio and visual elements provide confirmation and unfailing assurance that this is from the Lord.

A key expression in a word study is “called to preach.” The Greek word καλέω (*kaleō*) means “to call aloud,” or “to name.”<sup>37</sup> The word “preach” comes from the Greek word κηρύσσω (*kēryssō*) which means “to proclaim,” “to declare,” “to announce” or “to herald.”<sup>38</sup> Prophesying is akin to the idea of a declaration or official announcement by an official representative of the Lord (I Peter 1:10). Similar words for preaching in the New Testament are “debating” (Acts 17:17), “persuading,” “reasoned and reasoning” (Acts 17:17; 24:25), “reporting” (I Peter 1:12), “pleading,” “alleging,” and “contending” (Jude 3) as in giving a rational ready answer (I Peter 3:15) for the Christian faith and belief in Christ. In I Corinthians 15:1-3 Paul states “I would remind you of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which in turn received . . . for I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received.” What Macedonia and the world deserve is nothing less than those called to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ.

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<sup>34</sup> M. G. Easton, *Easton’s Bible Dictionary* (Albany, OR: AGES Software, 1997), <http://www.ntslibrary.com/PDF%20Books/Eastons%20Bible%20Dictionary.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Boring and Craddock, *People’s New Testament Commentary*, 486.

<sup>36</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, “Acts,” in *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament in Ten Volumes*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 669.

<sup>37</sup> G2564 - *kaleō* - *Strong’s Greek Lexicon (KJV)*, 1996 Blue Letter Bible, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong=G2564&t=KJV>.

<sup>38</sup> G2784 - *kēryssō* - *Strong’s Greek Lexicon (KJV)*, Blue Letter Bible, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong=G2784&t=KJV>.

Stephen Hankins in discussing Macedonia call to preach, describes four biblical ways that the call to preach is presented: (1) by the term *kalew*, (2) as a sending by God, (3) as an act of the Holy Spirit, and (4) as God's granting of a gift to the Church.<sup>39</sup> I Corinthians 9:16 reads "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel" (KJV). Hughes comments, "Authentic turning points in history are few, but surely among them that of the Macedonian vision ranks high."<sup>40</sup>

The call of God is a summons to perform a specific task in God's service. Moses was at the backside of a desert when his curiosity was aroused and held by a burning bush. Then he heard the voice of God calling, "Moses, Moses." That spectacular and life-changing event is recorded in Exodus 3 and 4. The "Burning Bush," the "Holy Ground," and the commission, "Come and I will send you," are assuring aspects of Moses' confirmation that God called him to be Israel's deliverer from Egyptian's bondage. This is what sustained Moses throughout the arduous wilderness experience and during Israel's perpetual arguing about whether Moses was called by God. The Prophet Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and the Apostle Paul all had practically the same call from conception. Paul puts it this way, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by His grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach Him," (Galatians 1:15-16 KJV). The prophet Nehemiah felt the burden during his secular

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<sup>39</sup> Stephen J. Hankins, "A New Testament Theology of the Call to the Christian Ministry: An Exegetical Analysis of its Subjective and Objective Elements," (PhD diss., Bob Jones University, 1993), 101-112.

<sup>40</sup> Hughes, *Acts: The Church Afire*, 201.



employment after he heard that Jerusalem burned out and its walls were broken down, and the forsaken, poor and exposed Jewish remnant population.

In Acts 16, Luke mentioned the word, “Gospel.” His gospel message is filled with a variation of the word relating to physical healing, the exorcism of demons and spiritual deliverance. So, in the immediate context of Acts 16, the good news is shared with a business woman, her associates and other women, a demon possessed slave girl is delivered from monetary exploitation and manipulation, and a jail-keeper with his household are saved and baptized. This is a continuation of Jesus’ ministry through the workings of the Holy Spirit in the apostles’ service, fulfilling Jesus’ promise of “greater works than these shall you do” (John 14:12). Jesus fulfilled what He read from Isaiah: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor” (Luke 4:18). Publicans and sinners “heard Him gladly” for they had the good news proclaimed to them. To Zacchaeus (an outcast because he was a chief tax collector) Jesus said, “For the Son of Man is come to seek out and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10). Indeed, as Paul writes “... I am not ashamed of the Gospel; for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith” (Romans 1:16). J. Hampton Keathley, III utilizing *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* provided the background and meaning of the word gospel. It states:

The term gospel is found ninety-nine times in the NASB and ninety-two times in the NET Bible. In the Greek New Testament, gospel is the translation of the Greek noun *euangelion* (occurring 76 times) ‘good news,’ and the verb *euangelizo* (occurring 54 times), meaning ‘to bring or announce good news.’ Both words are derived from the noun *angelos*, ‘messenger.’ In classical Greek, an *euangelos* was one who brought a message of victory or other political or personal news that caused joy. In addition, *euangelizomai* (the middle voice form

of the verb) meant ‘to speak as a messenger of gladness, to proclaim good news.’<sup>41</sup>

The message of the gospel is Christ for he is both the object and author; Christ is the content of the message proclaimed. In a bible.org article, Keathley quoted The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia summary of what the gospel message is, writing:

The central truth of the gospel is that God has provided a way of salvation for men through the gift of His son to the world. He suffered as a sacrifice for sin, overcame death, and now offers a share in His triumph to all who will accept it. The gospel is good news because it is a gift of God, not something that must be earned by penance or by self-improvement.<sup>42</sup>

A college professor frequently remarked “The Gospel is only good news if it gets there (where the needs exist) on time.” This is the urgency that moved Paul and his team to proclaim that Salvation is free and brings freedom. Salvation “represents the whole work of God by which He rescues man from the eternal ruin and doom of sin and bestows on him the riches of His grace, including eternal life now and eternal life in heaven,”<sup>43</sup>

## Conclusion

Acts 16 provides a wonderful dynamic and structure for missionary and evangelistic grounding and strategy for any ministry. Since this writer’s earliest days after conversion from Hinduism, this writer has been burdened for Christian ministry in a Caribbean context. This writer had an early exposure to the varied needs of the churches

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<sup>41</sup> J. Hampton Keathley, III, “*What is the Gospel?*” Bible.org, Biblical Studies Foundation, May 18, 2004, <https://bible.org/article/what-gospel>.

<sup>42</sup> Keathley, III, “What is the Gospel?”

<sup>43</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer and John F. Walvoord, *Major Bible Themes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1974), 181.

in Guyana and Jamaica. The “we” passage in Acts 16, indicates that Paul was accompanied by Timothy, Silas and Dr. Luke as ministry partners. This demonstrates teamwork at its best where yoke-fellows, fellow soldiers and helpers are striving towards one goal. They were both tentmakers, as Paul called his secular profession and professionals like Doctor Luke was to Paul and his companions. Evangelism and other forms of ministry cannot thrive or survive in isolation.

This writer traveled to several populated communities in the Caribbean and the United States where the Christian witness needed strengthening and a biblically grounded knowledge for their faith. Several small congregations struggle without qualified pastoral leadership, and church members were unable to adequately articulate or defend a clear witness of their faith and salvation. The writer’s teaching ministry at Guyana Bible College and Fairview Baptist Bible College was to prepare and instill pastoral students with an insatiable thirst and a secure foundation for the word of God as they proclaim the gospel in churches and in marketplaces. Also, the writer’s pastoral work experience is like a canvas on which is painted what is effective ministry, pitfalls and mistakes to avoid, and new initiatives to implement.

The way the Lord directed me to Bible College in Jamaica and closed the door to the Island of St. Vincent Bible College was providential. In Jamaica, there was a cross-session of students from St. Lucia, Grenada, Dominica, Aruba, England, Guyana and Jamaica. This was the perfect environment to ferment and cement lifelong friendships and create ministry opportunities. Over several years I have connected with other graduates and pastors to augment their ministries both in revival and on evangelistic campaigns as a special occasion guest speaker, and at theological and biblically focused

related educational seminars. The writer has coordinated with and sponsored other ministerial endeavors. The providential prohibition that Paul and his co-laborers experienced rings true in my own life and future ministry. The Lord's direction to fields of service is truly remarkable even though it goes against human intuition and self-determination as the Spirit of the times suggests.

A vision and passion for the work of the Lord will sustain anyone in any field of missionary undertakings. A vision also gives a sense of security that workers are not chasing hunches but there is assurance that God's blessings will attend every effort no matter how unyielding and no matter where opposition exists. Christian calling for service is based on the word of God. We ascertain that the Lord has called us to preach. Approaching and laboring in unexpectedly new fields (as Paul and his friends discovered) will not be filled with dissatisfaction, for the Lord will give a harvest in due season if we faint not.

The intersection of need, opportunity and availability is where productive service takes place. The Caribbean connection is vast, and the need is great. The vision is matched by the call of Macedonia. Churches and individuals must team up and march toward the fields—for they are white and ready for the harvest. The laborers are few, so we beseech others to join the team. The work is all divine.

## CHAPTER THREE

### HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

#### Introduction

Crichton Mitchell wrote a moving and poignant introduction that captures the outstanding life and ministry of Bishop Francis Asbury, an English pioneer and phenomenal missionary. Mitchell writes, “What Wesley was to England, Asbury was to America-but much more so. An Englishman by birth; an American by calling and choice; an apostle by election and passion, Asbury was the architect of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which became the womb of a score or more modern evangelical holiness churches and denominations. Francis Asbury was Methodism incarnate let loose on the American continent.”<sup>1</sup> That is extraordinary praise.

But with all that praise and significance noted above, John Wigger remarkably pointed out that Francis Asbury has been a long-neglected figure in American religious history. “He adopted to the landscape and culture of America with surprising speed...He developed a remarkably keen sense of what Americans were looking for and how to reach them with the Methodist message of salvation<sup>2</sup>. Again, Wigger writes, “He was

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<sup>1</sup> Crichton Mitchell, *Great Holiness Classics, Volume 2* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Publishing, 1997), 459.

<sup>2</sup> John H. Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3.

closely connected to people. His legacy is not in books and sermons, but in the thousands of ordinary believers who saw him close up and took him (in however limited a way) as their guide.”<sup>3</sup> Unlike other luminaries of American great religious traditions, Asbury is hardly featured or recognized. He is often overshadowed by more erudite, quarrelsome, or showy performers on the landscape of historic proportions.”<sup>4</sup> It also finds it remarkable that there is very little written about such a man that impacted not only America Methodist but through other denominations his work has international impact. The international and global African Methodist Episcopal Church’s founder, Bishop Richard Allen, was ordained and consecrated by Asbury. It is recorded that Bishop Asbury also preached the first message in the first and newly formed Bethel AME Church in Philadelphia.

Wigger observes that Asbury was an ordinary man doing extraordinary things whereby he is called an American or people’s saint.<sup>5</sup> That descriptive is weighty of a man born to humble parents in an unfamiliar place without an acclaim to his name but a blacksmith or notoriety to his background. Asbury was a powerful individual who communicated his vision for Methodism that defined much of evangelical culture in America.<sup>6</sup> Summarizing Wigger’s argument about Asbury’s impact,<sup>7</sup> Asbury is seen as religiously devoted with legendary piety and perseverance, cogent zeal and unwearied diligence in spite of every disappointment and connecting with ordinary folks and

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<sup>3</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 13.

<sup>5</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 4.

<sup>6</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 5.

<sup>7</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 5.

building lasting relationships. Asbury also understood and used popular culture somewhat the same way John Wesley has a sense of the hour.

Wigger writes, “Asbury acted as a mediator between Wesley and common Americans. Wesley and Asbury came from significantly different backgrounds, but they shared a realization that the dominant religious institutions of their day were failing to reach most people. The great question they both addressed was how to make the gospel relevant in their time and place. The audience was never far from their minds. This led Asbury to do things in America that he wouldn’t have done in England, some of which Wesley disapproved. Asbury, for example, accepted emotionalism of southern worship in the 1770s, promoted camp meetings in the 1800s, and reluctantly acquiesced to southern Methodist holding slaves. The mediating impulse, transmitted from Wesley through Asbury, became a trademark of American Methodism.”<sup>8</sup>

Again, continuing to summarize Wigger’s assessment of Asbury’s significance and message was through the organization of the Methodist church. He noted that Asbury was a brilliant administrator, using the itinerate system to his advantage which served rural areas very well. Asbury was a keen judge of human motivation and had a superior talent to read men.<sup>9</sup> Asbury was a scripturally committed, mentally strong, consistently serious but with a workingman’s humor-a-true artisan-preacher. Whether or not he was always right is open to question, but he had a visionary’s understanding of the big picture and the long road.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 7.

<sup>9</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 8.

<sup>10</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 5.

### **Asbury's Early Life and Family Influence**

Asbury was born on August 20, 1745, in the village of Handsworth in England's West Midlands and near Birmingham, into a working-class Anglican family. His parents are Joseph and Elizabeth Asbury. His father was a farmer and gardener. His mother was a devoted to religion and that accounted for the impact that the Methodist influence will exert on his life and ministry. According to one uncredited and unknown source Asbury's devoted mother, Elizabeth, saw a vision in which she was informed that her son would be a spiritual giant. His mother read the Bible to young Asbury for an hour each day, singing hymns and praying with him. The influence of Asbury parents as Methodist followers had a bearing on his exposure and call to ministry.

From John Wigger's book, *American Saint, Asbury and the Methodist*<sup>11</sup> one gleaned that the Handsworth's community in England's West Midlands was called the Black Country because of the black smoke that hung over the area and made everything look black from the coal mining industry. The health risks were enormous for families. Asbury dropped out of school before he was twelve to work as a blacksmith's (metalworking) apprentice. He used chisels, hammers, and files, to fashioned buttons, bucket handles, and scabbards. It was not until the time he was about fifteen, he had been awakened in the Christian faith. Asbury was introduced to John Wesley's writings in which he read about Wesley's struggle about faith and salvation on his encounter with German Moravians on his journey back to England from America, where Wesley was a failure as a missionary to convert the American Indians. Asbury read about Wesley's frustration in England after his return as Wesley preached without conviction and

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<sup>11</sup> Wigger. *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodist*, 13.



passion; then his conversion at Aldersgate Street Society meeting while Wesley read Martin Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans at about quarter to nine one night. John Wesley's description of his conversion as Asbury read it was, "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation: an assurance was given me, that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."<sup>12</sup>

Asbury was converted in the winter of 1760 after hearing the eloquent Methodist evangelist, Alexander Mather, preached the grace of God with joy, logic and dramatic illustrations. He had observed the Methodist were happy and seemed confidently assured that they were going to heaven. This caused him to investigate the Wesley's and the Methodist and this probe led to his conversion. Asbury wrote about his "leaping heart," walking in air and filled with confidence after receiving salvation. Graves quoted Asbury, "I was then about fifteen; and young as I was, the Word of God soon made deep impressions on my heart."<sup>13</sup> He and his mother attended Methodist meetings, where soon he began to preach as an evangelist; he was appointed a full-time Methodist preacher by the time he was twenty-one. Graves stated that Asbury was promoted to an "assistant" in his district, but he was reprimanded and reproofed for his tendency to ramble and to exceed his authority.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Charles Ludwig, *Francis Asbury: God's Circuit Rider* (Milford, MI: Mott Media, 1984), 31.

<sup>13</sup> Dan Graves, "Francis Asbury," *Christianity Today*, August 8, 2008, February 2019, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/denominationalfounders/francis-asbury.html>.70.

<sup>14</sup> Graves, *Francis Asbury*, 70.

In England, at twenty-three years of age, Asbury wrote to his parents sharing some of his concerns about the ways he was perceived by others:

Let others condemn me as being without natural affection, as being stubborn, disobedient to parents, or say what they please. It does not alter the case, for it is a small matter with me to be judged of man. I love my parents and friends, but I love my God better and his service, because it is perfect freedom, and he does not send me away at my own cost, for he gives me to prove, as my day is, my strength is, and it is my meat and drink to do his will. And tho I have given up all I do not repent, for I have found it all.<sup>15</sup>

Some think that Asbury was a self-taught lay preacher in England who was fervent in his service, and this may have caught the attention of John and Charles Wesley. Though a school dropout, Asbury launched five schools in America. He also promoted Sunday schools, in which children were taught reading, writing, and arithmetic.<sup>16</sup> He was considered a lonely, threatened, and harassed Englishman, who could not wait like others, who were seeking to escape English tyranny for a better life. In America while he traveled and preached, Asbury found time to read and study other books including the Greek New Testament.

The Methodists and the Wesley brothers operated within the Church of England, but when the Church refused Wesley's request to ordain Methodists preachers, John Wesley felt compelled to act. He ordained preachers that served in England and America. Asbury was one that answered the call to minister in America, along with Thomas Coke who was also appointed as a general superintendent. ,

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<sup>15</sup> Mitchell, *Great Holiness Classics* (1997), 459-460.

<sup>16</sup> "Francis Asbury," *Christianity Today*, August 8, 2008, <https://www.christianity.com/history/people/denominationalfounders/francis-asbury.html>.

According to Joe Lovino of the United Methodist Communications, in November of 1784, Thomas Coke met Francis Asbury during a worship service at Barratt's Chapel in Frederica, Delaware and shared that John Wesley sent him to ordain Asbury and appoint him superintendent of the Methodist in America.<sup>17</sup> But, Asbury rejected Wesley's offer made by Thomas Coke. Instead, Asbury insisted and with Coke's agreement, a Christmas Conference in 1784 was scheduled in Baltimore where the American Methodist preachers would have a vote and voice in the appointment of a superintendent. Asbury was appointed as superintendent and twelve lay leaders were elected and ordained as elders and clergy. Soon thereafter Asbury and Coke assumed the title of bishop and were referred to as bishops by the Methodist Church in America. One writer stated that John Wesley wrote Asbury a scathing rebuke for assuming the title "Bishop." Lovino quoted from Asbury's journal about the Christmas Conference: "We spent the whole week in conference, debating freely, and determining all things by a majority of votes. We were in haste and did much business in a little time."<sup>18</sup> December 24, 1784 marked the historic beginning of Methodism in America.

With regards to the call to ministry it should be said that in 1771 while under the influence and teachings of the Methodist Church and the Wesley's, Asbury answered the call to preach and work in the American colonies. Asbury landed at Philadelphia in October 1771 and here in America, he remained until his death on March 1816. He never lost the fiery zeal that had gripped him when first he heard the Methodist, Alexander Mather preached. Mr. Mather, one of Wesley's itinerants, came into those parts when I

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<sup>17</sup> Joe Lovino, *UMC.org at United Methodist Communications*, December (2017), 2.

<sup>18</sup> Joe Lovino, *UMC.org at United Methodist Communications*, December (2017), 2.

was about fifteen; and young as I was, the word of God soon made deep impressions on my heart, which brought me to Jesus Christ, who graciously justified my guilty soul through faith in his precious blood, and soon showed me the excellency and necessity of holiness.<sup>19</sup>

Asbury adjusted to life in America. He also worked in New York and Maryland where he formed the preaching circuits which was a trademark of Methodism in England by John Wesley and was now a prominent feature of Methodism in America. This was Asbury in America, whose life and ministry paralleled that of the Founder of Methodism, John Wesley, in England. The Wesley brothers, as well as Asbury, were persecuted, threatened, harassed, disturbed, and faced death threats. There were constant threats and fears throughout Asbury's ministry.

At the start of the American Revolutionary War, Francis Asbury decided to remain in America and serve the fledgling Methodist movement. He was never to return to England. He refused John Wesley's directive for all the ordained ministers to return to England. When other Methodist leaders remarked that the American Revolution was a wicked rebellion against England and the Crown, Asbury kept his focus believing America would win and the Methodists will have a strong foothold in America. Asbury is seen as someone who treasured his calling to America. All the other Methodist itinerants left America, and also left Asbury to serve alone. Asbury stayed because there would be no one left in America to provide and administer the sacraments of communion and baptism to the Methodists. Lay men can lead the services and preside over the love feast, but there was the need for the ordained clergy which Asbury was determined to fulfill.

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<sup>19</sup> Crichton Mitchell, *Great Holiness Classics, Volume 2, The Wesley Century* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1984), 460.

Graves stated that during the war, “Asbury braved the dangers. He hid in a swamp for two days to elude an unfriendly patrol and once a bullet passed through his hat.”<sup>20</sup>

During the Revolutionary War, Asbury remained politically neutral. To avoid signing an oath disclaiming his allegiance to England and to dodge the American draft, he went into hiding for several months. Asbury, the Father of American Methodism, never married. He has been called the Prophet of the Long Road. He was the greatest of the circuit riders and became one of the best-known men across America. His home was literally the open road and the saddle. Harry Hoosier, an early evangelist in the colonies, was as Thomas Coke said, “One of the best preachers in the world and was often a traveling companion of Asbury.”<sup>21</sup> By the end of the war, Francis Asbury had retained his credibility with the victorious Americans and was able to continue his ministry in America and the fledgling Methodist movement.

### **Asbury’s Call to Ministry**

Gleaned from Crichton Mitchell’s work, *Great Holiness Classics, Volume 2, The Wesley’s Years* <sup>22</sup> are the following information of Asbury’s call and life: In 1771, at a gathering of Methodist ministers in Bristol, England, John Wesley asked and issued the call to the need in America. “Our brethren in America called aloud for help. Who are willing to go over and help them?” Asbury volunteered. When speaking of the passion that propelled him ceaselessly for a lifetime, he wrote: “I have done it for souls; had I

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<sup>20</sup> Graves, *Francis Asbury: Christianity Today*, 70.

<sup>21</sup> Chester E. Custer, *The United Methodist Primer* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1986), 27.

<sup>22</sup> Mitchell, *Great Holiness Classics*, 461.

done it for silver, there is not enough in New York to pay me.” Wesley’s appeal for missionaries reminds one of Isaiah’s call: “Whom shall I send? Who will go for me?” (6:8); Jeremiah’s commission: “For you shall go to whatever people I send you and say whatever I tell you to say,” (1:7); Moses appointment: “Come now; I will send you,” (Exodus 3: 10), and Paul’s “Macedonia Call” that he encountered in a night vision, (Acts 16).

Four days before leaving for America from Bristol, Asbury confided to writing in his journal in September 1771, what will become his secret of his life’s purpose: I will set down a few things that lie on my mind. Whither am I going? To the New World. What to do? To gain honour? No, if I know my own heart. To get money? No; I am going to live to God, and to bring others to do so.<sup>23</sup>

When, in October 1771, Asbury landed in Philadelphia, there were only 600 Methodists in America. Within days, he hit the road preaching but pushed himself so hard that he fell ill that winter. This was the beginning of a pattern: over the next 45 years, he suffered from colds, coughs, fevers, severe headaches, ulcers, and eventually chronic rheumatism, which forced him off his horse and into a carriage. Graves wrote that Asbury pushed his horse; rain or shine, he was in the saddle. While riding, he read, sang hymns, learned languages, fasted and prayed. He preached to any audience he could find, despite the threats, fines and illness. Sickness plagued Asbury. He half-killed himself with overwork and exposure, unable to lie still long enough. He preached with an ulcerated throat and high fever. Many times, he was so weak that he had to be

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<sup>23</sup> Mitchell, *Great Holiness Classics*, 460.

helped to his saddle.<sup>24</sup> Yet he continued to preach. Of Asbury, Wigger wrote, he rode down the mountain in Virginia because he could not walk. Each step that his horse took jolted him with pain.<sup>25</sup> Decent lodging was hard to come by and usually crowded; food was sparse. Usually his poor horse would get by with little or no corn.

Asbury's secret strength and stamina, and spiritual grace can be drawn from his frequent, dangerous, grueling and long horseback travels to several states with scattered Missions and stations. He preached often, and almost daily wherever there was an audience. His failing health, poor eating and uncomfortable accommodations plagued his endeavors. He felt that his mission and passion carried him, and he kept his focus on Christ.

John Wigger commented that Asbury, though not as educated or cultured as John Wesley possessed an unsurpassed willingness to communicate his vision of the relevance of the gospel and Methodism in America. Asbury's devotion to his audience allowed him to implement and do things in America that would meet with England's disapproval. He saw very clearly that the Methodists must be adaptable to the ever-changing and spreading of the political and social frontiers. Even in his ordination as bishop, he had insight to break with Wesley's procedure. He refused to accept the position of superintendent unless he should be elected to it by his brethren. This decision was probably the taproot of the General Conference of the Methodist Church.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Graves, *Francis Asbury* (Christianity.com, 2019).

<sup>25</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 310.

<sup>26</sup> Mitchell, *Great Holiness Classics*, 461.

### Asbury's Ministry in America

As already noted, after the war, John Wesley ordained Englishman Thomas Coke as Wesley's American superintendent. Coke, in turn, ordained Asbury at the famous Baltimore Christmas Conference of 1784, which gave birth to the American Methodist Episcopal Church. On Christmas Day, Asbury was ordained a deacon, the following day, an elder, and on December 27, a superintendent and against Wesley's advice, Asbury later used the term, bishop. As Coke put it, "We were in great haste and did much business in a little time." Within six months, Coke returned to England, and thereafter, Asbury alone held the reins of American Methodism.<sup>27</sup>

In the late 1700s, ninety-five percent of Americans lived in places with fewer than 2,500 inhabitants, and thus most did not have access to a church or clergy. This is one reason Asbury pushed for missionary expansion into the Tennessee and Kentucky frontier—even though his and other preachers' lives were constantly threatened by illness and Indian attacks. According to biographer Ezra Tipple, Asbury's preaching was more zeal than art, and highly effective. Tipple wrote there were occasions when under the rush of his utterance, people sprang to their feet as if summoned to the judgment bar of God."<sup>28</sup>

A notable inclusion in American Methodism by Asbury, in addition to the circuit riding and itinerant ministry was the introduction of camp meeting. In his new study of early Methodism, Russell E. Richey makes the insightful analysis that church leaders seized upon camp meetings as a way of preserving the original zeal, community, and

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<sup>27</sup> Joe Lovino, *UMC.org at United Methodist Communications* (December 2017), 2.

<sup>28</sup> Ezra Squire Tipple, *Asbury and Methodism*, Vol. 102, Issue 2650, Article: Francis Asbury, 1745 1816 (Nation 4/13/1916), 413-414.



freshness of the early decades at a time when the church was becoming more and more like an institution. The revivalistic atmosphere previously exhibited at the conferences shifted to the camp meetings as the conferences themselves became more administrative.<sup>29</sup> These camp meetings were large outdoor gatherings that were held regularly or annually for several days and were characterized by revival preaching. Camp meetings added a passionate and enlivened element to the worship services.

Additionally, to Asbury's credit there was the inclusion of women in the service and ministry of the Methodist church in America. Methodism in America show that ideas and values can threaten the socially accepted norms; men and women from various backgrounds, classes, races, cultures and regions can relate and unite. The mixing of races, the participation by women in ministry, or the emotional exuberance and outbursts in services were welcomed though these expressions seem as provocative and outside of the norm. Structurally, the challenge by these Methodist practices to socially acceptable institutions—to slavery, patriarchy, the established church, and traditional entertainments—undermined those social norms and acceptable and expected rules of engagement. Russel Richey makes the statement: “Under Asbury’s charismatic preaching, members of both sexes shouted, stomped, wept, and cried out, at times uncontrollably.” Not only did this violate the era’s norms of appropriate behavior in services, but it also violated norms of appropriate behavior for women.<sup>30</sup> So, Asbury did urge and encouraged women to exert themselves in the labor for the gospel ministry; he considered their gifts, piety, graces, contributions and work in the new church as vital. On

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<sup>29</sup> Russel E. Richey, *Early American Methodism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991), 29-30.

<sup>30</sup> Richey, *Early American Methodism*, 82-83.

the dehumanizing and shameful subject of slavery, the Methodist Church joined the Quakers and Moravians in opposing and denouncing the purchasing, selling and holding of slaves.

Mitchell makes the significant contrast and comparison about the length and depth and wonder of the life of Asbury.

For 45 years he rode up, down, and across the colonies preaching the gospel of full salvation from all sin for all men. He counseled hundreds of converts, organized and supervised scores of Societies. In travel, he outdid even Wesley, riding almost 280,000 miles on horseback. That averages about 6,000 miles a year; the equivalent of a round trip across the United States every year for 45 years. He sat in at least 224 Annual conferences, and ordained 4,000 ministers. Asbury was ordained bishop when he was 39 years of age; at that time the Methodists of America numbered about 14,000 members and 80 preachers. He laid his armor down at 71 when the church had almost 212,000 members and more than 700 itinerant preachers. He did for America what Wesley could never have done with the ideas and procedures that worked so well in England. It took a man whose heart was fused to America and to the cause of Christ here. He saw very clearly that the Methodists must be adaptable to the ever changing and spreading of the political and social frontiers.<sup>31</sup>

In John Wigger's estimation, the first century church tradition was maintained with the ordination and consecration of the first two bishops at the "creation of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784." Asbury was one of those two bishops.

And for thirty-years Asbury led a sometimes fractious and always demanding body of preachers; his chief chosen responsibility was appointing rising numbers of young itinerants to circuits throughout the nation, as well as the myriad concerns of any new clerical organization in the new republic: establishing discipline and a clear order of hierarchy, coping with the impact of marriage on preachers' commitments, determining the future of slavery and of African Americans in church, establishing an academy for preachers' sons (a failure), and establishing a publishing house (a huge success).<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Mitchell, *Great Holiness Classics*, 460-461.

### **Asbury's Association with Thomas Coke**

As stated earlier, in 1784, John Wesley ordained and appointed Dr. Thomas Coke as superintendent of the societies in America, after his labor in England and Ireland. Some of the information contained below was gathered from Norman Thomas' article entitled "*Coke, Thomas*" *Methodist Bishop and Missionary*.<sup>33</sup> Thomas Coke was born in Brecon, Wales in 1747 to wealthy parents. His father, Bartholomew Coke, was a successful apothecary and city official. He was well educated with a civil law degree; he was also an ordained Anglican priest, rector at South Petherton in Somerset. He eventually became disaffected with the Church of England and because of his Methodist tendencies for such things as adopting the open-air and cottage meeting (akin to cell groups and the class leader system) he was dismissed from the priesthood in 1777. He joined the Methodist church and became very fervent, passionate and valuable to John Wesley and the Methodist movement as a gifted evangelistic speaker, skilled administrator and trusted friend. Coke also made strenuous efforts to heal breach and division between the Methodist and Anglican communions. In an article from Emory University, *Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke: The First Methodist Bishops Exhibit* (Summer 2010), mention is made that upon the death of John Wesley, Thomas Coke returned to England. But before his departure he had secret communication with Bishop William White of the Protestant Episcopal Church regarding reunification with the

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<sup>32</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 406.

<sup>33</sup> Norman Thomas. "Coke, Thomas," in *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (New York, NY: Macmillan Reference USA, 1998), 143.

Methodist Episcopal Church. This effort was later discovered and led to the further undermining of confidence of Thomas Coke in the eyes of the American Methodist Church.<sup>34</sup>

According to John Wesley and following his directives, Thomas Coke was commissioned to ordain Francis Asbury as an associate superintendent in the New Continent. The first meeting between Coke and Asbury took place on November 14, 1784. The Emory University article mentioned that Asbury was joyful of and comforted by the meeting. He was surprised that the meeting was for his ordination and appointment as Superintendent in America as directed by John Wesley. Asbury then agreed to be ordained if the American Methodist preachers “unanimously choose me.” Coke was impressed by Asbury’s demeanor and bearing, describing Asbury as full of simplicity, wisdom, meekness, love, and uniquely qualified as a bishop.<sup>35</sup>

However, at the Christmas Conference in American (Barratt’s Chapel, Baltimore) December 27, 1784, Asbury was the dominant figure and was ordained and appointed superintendent. He, as well as Coke, then assumed the title of bishop which irritated and caused a stir back in England, especially by John Wesley who wrote against it and at the same time felt that his authority was challenged and slipping by this action of self-assumption of the title of bishop in America. Asbury also took steps to institute a centralized church government with a Book of Discipline and order of Service as designated after the Methodist format in England by John Wesley. To an extent Coke and

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<sup>34</sup> *Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke: The First Methodist Bishops Exhibit* (Summer 2010), Emory University, Atlanta, GA: Copyright 2019, [https://pitts.emory.edu/collections/digital collections/ exhibits/as bury-coke.cfm](https://pitts.emory.edu/collections/digital%20collections/exhibits/asbury-coke.cfm).

<sup>35</sup> *Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke: The First Methodist Bishops Exhibit* (Summer 2010)..

Asbury were coequals as superintendents and bishops in the American Methodist movement. Coke and Asbury had ongoing and unrelenting differences and disagreements about Methodist policies and approaches to the work in America.<sup>36</sup>

A summary of John Vickers remarks on Coke and Asbury<sup>37</sup> are as follows: In 1789, they disagreed when Asbury proposed a Council of Bishops who would have veto power and presiding elders that would make decisions for the whole connection as the church was expanding. But both Coke and Asbury were staunch, ardent opponents to slavery to the point that they threatened slaveholders with excommunication and met with President George Washington with antislavery protest and petition. Coke made many trips back to England; he traveled to other parts of the world including, Jamaica in the Caribbean. Coke was an enthusiast who had a pioneering passion for missionary endeavors which he financed from his family wealth and from begging monetary donations from any who should so desire to give. Coke believed in the world is my Parish philosophy as did John Wesley. Coke was happily married to Penelope Goulding Smith for five years, and whose death was due to delicate health. His second marriage lasted one year, ending in the death of his wife. Coke died on May 3, 1814 at sea while on a trip to Ceylon and India, leading a group of preachers to India and South Africa.

Asbury, on the other hand remained steadfast in America; he never revisited his homeland. Francis Asbury never got married even though he had an interest in a Ms. Brooke which his mother discouraged; he lived as a celibate and ascetic, he spent the remainder of his life preaching the gospel and nurturing the Methodist organization

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<sup>36</sup> John A. Vickers, *The Journals of Dr. Thomas Coke* (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 2005), 10.

<sup>37</sup> Vickers, *The Journals of Dr. Thomas Coke*, 6-15.

throughout America. Francis Asbury was a missionary before he became a bishop in 1784 and was a missionary afterwards—until the day he died in late March 1816.

### **Asbury's Influence on Richard Allen, AME Traditions**

Asbury did not limit his work to administration and preaching. Asbury hated slavery and he petitioned George Washington to enact antislavery legislation. Al DeFilippo wrote *The Asbury Triptych Series* that found in the “Diary of George Washington,” Wednesday, May 25, 1785: “Expected General Roberdeau and some Methodist clergyman to dinner but they did not come.” DeFilippo added, that the two Methodist clergyman referenced in the diary of George Washington were Francis Asbury and the new arrival from England, Dr. Thomas Coke.” In his journal Asbury wrote, “My spirit was grieved at the conduct of some Methodists that hire slaves at public places to the highest bidder, to cut skin, and starve them.”<sup>38</sup>

Asbury had a profound influence on Richard Allen (February 14, 1760 to March 26, 1831); Allen was born a slave in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He later became an educator, writer, minister and founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Benjamin Chew, a Quaker lawyer, owned the Allen family, and eventually sold the Allen family to Stokeley Sturgis, a Delaware planter. Allen was converted to Methodism at 17. His master, Sturgis became a Methodist from whom Allen purchased his freedom for \$2,000 in 1783. Allen quickly grew in the faith, attended class meetings, preached in Methodist churches and meetings in Baltimore and Philadelphia. Allen was trusted and reliable as a member of the Methodist church which offered Blacks organizational duties

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<sup>38</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 181-182.

as exhorters and preachers. In his book, *Freedom's Prophet*, Richard Newman wrote, "Francis Asbury relied on Allen to spread the gospel to people of color."<sup>39</sup> Allen joined St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church, and continued teaching and preaching. Allen was ordained a deacon by Asbury. Allen accompanied Asbury on many preaching tours on the circuit. Newman wrote, "Allen refused to travel to the Carolinas with Methodist preacher Francis Asbury. Those slave 'slave countries,' as he (Allen) put it, scared the hell out of him. Life was nowhere easy for a slave."<sup>40</sup> Newman further wrote that after purchasing his freedom, Allen, who was called "Negro Allen," chose the name "Richard Allen," for unknown reasons. Allen set off on the Methodist preaching circuit. Ever cautious and calculating, Allen took no chances when he hit the road. He made sure that he had a pass, or a letter of testimonial, allowing him unfettered movement."<sup>41</sup>

Between the Baptist, Presbyterians, Quakers and other religious groups, the Africans were attracted to, and chose the Methodist as the organization as the best vehicle to engineer their interests and pursuits of freedom and equality. In 1743, John Wesley said, "Give liberty to whom liberty is due, that is, to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary action. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion. Be gentle toward all men; and see that you invariably do with everyone as you would he should do unto you." It was the Golden Rule philosophy of Jesus and human equality that Wesley was advocating and urged his followers to embrace that found a responsive chord in the heart

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<sup>39</sup> Richard S. Newman, *Freedom's Prophet: Bishop Richard Allen, the AME Church, and the Black Founding Fathers* (New York, NY and London, England: New York University Press, 2008), 42.

<sup>40</sup> Newman, *Freedom's Prophet*, 36.

<sup>41</sup> Newman, *Freedom's Prophet*, 45.

of the Africans who were inhumanely treated. There was no justification for slavery. The anti-slavery efforts to outlaw the slave trade by fight of persons as William Wilberforce were issues that Wesley and the British Methodists tried to encourage, and to exert that influence on the American slaveholders.<sup>42</sup>

Wesley rightly argued that “Freedom is unquestionably the birth right of all mankind; Africans as well as Europeans: to keep the former in a state of slavery, is a constant violation of that right, and therefore also of justice.”<sup>43</sup> Wesley was incensed by slavery, and he believed that the dominion of one man over another, and the cruelty slaveholders inflicted on slaves, made a mockery of God’s law.<sup>44</sup> Spiritual equality and soul liberty among people were fundamental beliefs in the early Methodist church, whether male, female, black or white. That idea galvanized and made the Methodist Church attractive to Richard Allen and his Black contemporaries. Galatians 3:28 speaks forcibly to that equality that the Methodist embraced: “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” It was difficult to grasp and understand how America with its ideals of natural rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness embrace an evil system that dehumanizes other human beings because of the color of their skin and country of origin.

Although slavery was condemned, the slavery question was not a settled issue in the Methodist Church. The northern states Methodists advocated for abolition while the southern states assiduously defended it, even with the use of Scriptures, and clung to it as

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<sup>42</sup> Brian D. Lawrence, *The Relationship Between the Methodist Church, Slavery and Politics, 1784-1844* (2017-2018, Janet Lindman. Ph.D. Master of Arts in History), 1.

<sup>43</sup> Lawrence, *The Relationship Between the Methodist Church, Slavery and Politics*, 18.

<sup>44</sup> Lawrence, *The Relationship Between the Methodist Church, Slavery and Politics*, 2.



a political and economic benefit. Southerners built their economic and social identity on slavery. Removing slavery from their lives would create an irreplaceable void that would inevitably cause chaos.<sup>45</sup>

Lawrence wrote that at the General Conference in 1780 at Baltimore the issue of slavery was denounced. Lawrence continued,

Asbury wrote a strong antislavery statement that included providing religious instructions and hopefully allow for gradual emancipation. This is important not only for the pressure it put on Methodist slaveholders, but also the direction of the Methodist Church this statement wished to put forward... As a bishop, Asbury had the arduous task of corralling Methodist preachers into a structured church, while also trying to preserve the antislavery position of the church. Asbury's antislavery beliefs had both a positive and negative impact on the early preachers in the Methodist church. The antislavery heritage of the Methodist church put it at odds with southerners who thought slavery was Biblically sanctioned.<sup>46</sup>

With an increased African Americans membership at St. George's, racial tensions mounted. Allen preached at 5:00 a.m. in special services on Sunday mornings to approximately 50 African American Methodists. Segregated seating was instituted which troubled Allen and the black congregants. In 1787, Allen and others walked out and formed Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, the first Methodist church in the United States specifically for African Americans.

The relationship between Asbury and Allen was a mutually respectful, solid and beneficial one. The strength of the respect was so strong that on July 29, 1794, Allen and the Black congregation of Bethel asked Bishop Francis Asbury to dedicate the Church and preach the first sermon there. Richard Allen served as Bethel's pastor; he

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<sup>45</sup> Lawrence, *The Relationship Between the Methodist Church, Slavery and Politics*, 3-4.

<sup>46</sup> Lawrence, *The Relationship Between the Methodist Church, Slavery and Politics*, 28-29.

was elected and consecrated as the first African American bishop in the United States. He abhorred and opposed slavery, worked assiduously for its abolition. He was against all colonization plans for African Americans in other countries.

### **Asbury and the Methodist Influence Other Holiness Movements**

In an interview for the release his book, *American Saint: Francis Asbury & the Methodists*, Wigger stated that “Methodism's theology, worship style, and system of discipline worked their ways deep into the fabric of American life, influencing nearly all other mass religious movements. So, Asbury's fingerprints have ended up on the holiness and Pentecostal movements.”<sup>47</sup>

The influence of the Methodist Church in America was far-reaching, and impacted the Pentecostal and Holiness movements and denominations.<sup>48</sup> The majority of first-generation Pentecostals leaders have their roots in Methodist Holiness teachings, with its heavy accent on spiritual conversion, equality, popular government, and strict moral living produced from the Great Awakenings, revival led by Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield from the 1730s – 1740s. This understanding of holiness and Christian responsibility were modeled after Wesley's, who expressly emphasized the salvation and renewal of the soul. The advancement of Pentecostalism had its inception from the charismatic revival in Topeka, Kansas in the early 1900's. Charles Fox Parham is considered as the “Father of the Pentecostal movement.”<sup>49</sup> Parham, born in Muscatine,

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<sup>47</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 10.

<sup>48</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 10.

<sup>49</sup> Robert G. Gromacki, *The Modern Tongues Movement* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1972), 25.

Iowa on June 4, 1873, was a member of a local Methodist church and was at one time an interim pastor; he taught Sunday school, held evangelistic services, taught about divine healing and studied the Wesleyan holiness teaching. William Joseph Seymour, an African American holiness preacher, raised in poverty, initiated the Azusa Street Revival, which gave rise to the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. He is believed to have Baptist and African Methodist Episcopal Church influences and affiliations. Smith Wigglesworth, a famous Pentecostal evangelist and faith healer, was converted in a Methodist church. Oral Roberts joined a member of a Methodist church, after receiving substantial support from the Methodist community.

### **His Death**

During his forty-five-year ministry in America, Bishop Francis Asbury traveled over 300,000 miles on horseback or in carriage from the coasts of Georgia to Canada. He crossed the Appalachians at least sixty times, participated and oversaw two hundred twenty-four annual conferences and preaching some 16,500 sermons. In America, letters addressed with "Bishop Asbury, United States of America" were delivered to him. Asbury overextended himself that after his last sermon, he was carried to his carriage because of his sheer bodily frailty and weakness. Through his influence Methodism had grown to approximately 200,000 strong. His legacy was evidenced by the 4,000 ordained Methodist preachers and a church numbering about 1.5 million. Wigger wrote that Asbury kept a private handwritten one line memorandum and evaluation of all his 2,040 preachers in twenty-eight annual conference meetings between 1810 and 1913. There were four concerns about those preachers: their piety (zealousness, faithfulness, devotion

to prayer, Bible reading and meditation), ability to preach (clearly, persuasively and diligently), and other strengths (studious, disciplinarian and language skills), and limitations (health issues, chronic debt, imprudence with the opposite sex and failure to travel and preach where appointed) that kept him back.<sup>50</sup>

Throughout his life, Asbury suffered from a bewildering assortment of ailments. Ludwig's assessment is worth reiterating. He, Asbury, suffered terribly from boils, fevers, inflammatory rheumatism, sore throat, weak eyes, bronchitis, asthma, toothache, ulcers of the throat and stomach, neuralgia, intestinal disorders, swollen glands, skin diseases and finally galloping consumption."<sup>51</sup> His death at Spotsylvania, Virginia on March 31, 1816, at the age of seventy was possibly from congestive heart failure.

Asbury's own words summed up his life's work, his unwavering motivation, and driving passion; he wrote in his Journal: I have done it for souls; had I done it for silver, there is not enough in New York to pay me.<sup>52</sup> Wiggery states that Asbury owned no property and had no family, having left his mother and father in England long before. He never married, and he believed that the greatest threat to his Church was the acquisition of wealth.<sup>53</sup>

In concluding this exceptional missionary's life and ministry, I find it fitting to close with words found in the foreword written by Robert E. Coleman for Ludwig's book, *Francis Asbury: God's Circuit Rider*. Coleman writes:

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<sup>50</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, 377-381.

<sup>51</sup> Charles Ludwig, *Francis Asbury: God's Circuit Rider*, (1984), 119-120.

<sup>52</sup> Crichton Mitchell, *Great Holiness Classics: The Wesley Century*, (1984), 461

<sup>53</sup> Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury and the Methodists*, (2009), 37.

In Washington, D.C. at the Convergence of Sixteenth Street and Columbia Road, stands a life-size statue of a man on horseback. His head is slightly bent as if engaged in meditation, while his eyes peer into the distance. The cape draped over his shoulders gives the salutary figure a dignified appearance, though it hardly seems adequate to provide shelter from the elements. That it has been a stormy ride becomes evident from the mud splattered on the traveler's boots and legs of his mount. But, however difficult his journey, there is a resolute purpose reflected in the weary form, which even in bronze, makes one pause to gaze with wonder upon the likeness of Francis Asbury, first apostle of American Methodism.

At the dedication of the monument on October 16, 1924, President Calvin Coolidge referred to the indomitable leader as one 'one of the builders of our nation, this circuit rider who spent his life making strong the foundation on which our government rests.' The grateful Head of State noted that the bishop's 'outposts marched with the pioneers, his missionaries visited the hovels of the poor, that all might be brought to a knowledge of the truth.' Then, recalling the 'sacrifice and service of this lone circuit rider,' Mr. Coolidge mused, 'who shall say where his influence, written in the immortal souls of men, shall end.'

Indeed, the shadow of his life and work is still lengthening across the land, not just in various branches of the Methodist Church, which he nourished, but more pervasively, through the whole spectrum of contemporary Evangelical Christianity rooted in revival. Asbury, probably more than any other churchman of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, embodied the spirit of our nation's greatest awakening.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Charles Ludwig, *Francis Asbury, God's Circuit Rider*, 31.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

#### **Introductions**

The specific theme of this dissertation is The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Educational Outreach Ministry-Bridge to the Caribbean. This theme has overarching theological implications which anchor and provide the framework for its implementation. My Biblical Foundation paper (Acts 16) addressed the Apostle Paul's first missionary excursion into Europe and the initial introduction of the Gospel into Europe. The evangelistic endeavor by Paul impacted three levels of society. First, a fledging unorganized Jewish community meeting by a river and not in a synagogue accepted the Christian gospel of Jesus when Lydia and her household were converted. Second, a commercial pagan society and enterprise was disrupted when the power of God was displayed in the exorcism of a demon possessed slave girl. Third, the working class, a city jailer, was saved after the demonstrative deliverance of Paul and Silas and their Christian witness: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."

The writer's Historical Foundation paper focused on the life and ministry of Bishop Francis Asbury, English pioneer and Methodist missionary to America. Bishop Asbury's life and ministry could be classified as a carbon copy of the Apostle Paul, except in the area of Asbury early educational background. Asbury answered the call by John Wesley for volunteers to minister in America. He was sent across the seas to serve

just before The American Revolutionary War from, 1775-1783 as America fought England for its independence. During this difficult time, he refused Wesley's instruction to return to England. He took a stand with and for America. Bishop Asbury is exemplary of the sacrifice of ministry: "Take up your cross and follow me daily." He traveled on horseback, was self-taught in Biblical languages, read widely, preached at every opportunity, and established Methodist churches despite much personal, tormenting and physical illness.

The writer's personal faith journey in Guyana, ministry involvement in Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, and The United States of America, and more specifically, along with my current context at Trinity African Methodist Episcopal Church in Newberry, South Carolina, allowed for several theological disciplines to inform and be foundational for the Doctor of Ministry project that is embarked upon. Bibliology, Christology, Ecclesiology, Pneumatology, and Practical theology will be considered without an exhaustive treatment on each of these doctrines. With a specific focus on Christian evangelism and discipleship, each theological issue will be viewed. These theological views and expressions are interwoven and interrelated.

### **Bibliology: How the Bible Speaks to the Theme of Evangelism**

What K. A. Kitchen said of the reliability of the Old Testament can also be said of the New Testament. Kitchen stated "In terms of general reliability - the Old Testament comes out remarkably well, so long as its writings and writers are treated fairly and evenhandedly, in line with independent data, open to all."<sup>1</sup> This reliable, historically

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<sup>1</sup> K. A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), 500.

accurate Bible is the self-revelation of God and His redemptive plan and program through Christ for fallen mankind. From Genesis to Revelation there are several major themes that theologians and sects see running through the Bible. These include Creation, Covenants, and the Kingdom of God. However, the one unifying red thread theme is salvation through redemptive sacrifice of Jesus Christ for lost and depraved mankind. If man is to know and be saved by the Infinite, Omnipotent, and Omniscient God, then God must manifest Himself to finite and depraved creatures. Man, by his own reasoning, searching, yearning, experience and devises cannot comprehend the depths and secrets of God's plan and program. "There is no one who is righteous, not even one;" ... "there is no one who seeks God;" ... "there is no fear of God before their eyes;" ...and "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" are expressions of man's depravity and alienation from God (Romans 3:10, 11, 18, 23).

Paul follows the Psalmist and speaks of three general (insufficient, inaudible and imperfect) revelation of God. 1. Conscience: A deeply felt, active, inclusive sense of moral approval or disapproval, rooted in the emotionally directive experiences that occur in the early years of childhood. It is rather to be considered the total self in the process of moral evaluation.<sup>2</sup> 2. Reason: The most important part of the image of God in human beings. It has two functions: seeing reality and God as they truly are, and making moral choices.<sup>3</sup> And, 3. Creation: In a proper sense of origination, *ex nihilo*, is the very first work that God does and extra. Nothing precedes it.<sup>4</sup> (Romans 1:18-23, Psalm 19:1).

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<sup>2</sup> Rodney Hunter, *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Nashville, TN: Abington Press, 1990), 216.

<sup>3</sup> Rodney Hunter, *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, 1045.

<sup>4</sup> William G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1889), 464.



After the original sin of rebellion and disobedience in the Garden of Eden, the Scriptures show that God became the first Evangelist announcing judgment on sin, on Adam and Eve, and creation, while at the same time proclaiming in typology His salvation's plan by blood sacrifice *when* He covered Adam and Eve with animal's skin (Genesis 3:8, 21). Genesis 3:15 is known as the proto-evangelium — the first Gospel. For the church, the Latin term proto-evangelism means in essence the 'first proclamation of the good news (that is, the gospel)' and encompasses the whole of redemptive history and prophecy.<sup>5</sup>

The proclamation is that God's people will eventually and ultimately triumph over the serpent. The unmasking of the enemy, the serpent, is vital to understanding of Genesis and the whole drama of redemption, and the mission of the Church. This serpent of Genesis is the same adversary of the Church that the Apostle Peter referred to as the roaring lion (1Peter 5:8), and who, the Apostle John identified as the great dragon, that old serpent, devil and Satan who deceives (Revelations 12:9; 20:2). In his article *Reading a Protoevangelium in the Context of Genesis*, David Pettus commented:

The Serpent is Satan in this passage, messianic exegesis of this passage, in part, turns on the proper definition and usage of the word 'seed' in this verse. Though the word only occurs in the singular in the Old Testament, it is a collective noun which means it can stand for both an individual and representative member of the category or a group within the category or the entirety of the category. Hamilton observes that this verse contains the only incidence in the Hebrew Bible where (סָרַפְּךָ) (רָצָה) (descendant, offspring, seed' occurs with the feminine, third person, pronominal suffix as 'her offspring.' It is rare indeed for the Hebrew Bible to refer to female seed.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> David Pettus, (2014) "Reading a Protoevangelium in the Context of Genesis," *Eruditio Ardescens*, Vol. 1, Is 2, Article 8, <http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/jlbts/vol1/iss2/8>.

<sup>6</sup> David Pettus, (2014), "Reading a Protoevangelium in the Context of Genesis," *Eruditio Ardescens*, Vol. 1: Is. 2, Article 8, <http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/jlbts/vol1/iss2/8>.

Paul expected that victory when he wrote: “The God of peace will shortly crush Satan under your feet” (Romans 16:20). “The seed of the woman is Christ: God sent forth His Son, born of a woman...to redeem...” (Galatians 4:4-5). Man on his own is already defeated and cannot win this war against what Martin Luther called the ancient foe. It takes the Christ of Calvary to deliver the crushing blow: “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it.” (Colossians 2:15). As already stated, the word “seed” only occurs in the feminine in Genesis 3:15 which is a rare usage. David Pettus in his article, *Reading a Protoevangelium in the Context of Genesis*, further commented: Whether Paul is referencing Genesis 3:15 in Galatians 4:4 as pastor Wiersbe opines or not, his understanding that Genesis 3:15 contains the ‘first gospel’ or protoevangelium has a venerable history in both ancient Jewish and Christian interpretation. The Jewish authors of the Septuagint and the Targums propounded a messianic understanding as did the Midrash Genesis Rabbah. In the church from the time of Ireneaus, (2nd century A.D), the details of this mysterious passage have been seen as pointing to Christ. Though Genesis 3:15 is never directly utilized in the New Testament in defense of the messianic claims of Jesus Christ, it is likely alluded to in several passages which cumulatively support the messianic nature of this text. Paul, for example, in his benediction to the church at Rome states, “The God of peace will shortly crush Satan under your feet.” (Roman 16:20).<sup>7</sup> The nature of the warfare between these seeds is described by the same Hebrew verb פָּגַע = which means ‘bruise’ or ‘crush’ or perhaps ‘strike at’. The image is one of the woman and her seed ‘crushing’ underfoot or striking at the serpent with a fatal blow, while the serpent strikes

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<sup>7</sup> David Pettus, "Reading a Protoevangelium in the Context of Genesis," *Eruditio Ardescens* 1, Is. 2 (2014).

furiously at the same time.<sup>8</sup> Elucidating the meaning of the Genesis 3:15 text and protoevangelium, Pettus propounded for his readers a broader perspective offered by scholars. He stated:

Four major views have been taken with regard to the meaning of this text. The first, the naturalistic view sees the serpent as a literal snake and the term ‘seed’ as collective humanity. The broader story in Genesis 3 functions as an etiology that explains why people perpetually fear and hate snakes and why women experience pain in childbirth. A second interpretation recognizes the symbolic language in the account and interprets the conflict between the serpent and the woman as a perpetual war between the representatives of evil and humankind. A third understanding, *sensus plenior* allows for a messianic interpretation latent in the text that would not have been recognized by the original author of Genesis but is revealed in the progressive unfolding of later divine revelation. Finally, the messianic reading finds in the text God’s promise of a coming ‘seed,’ as a designated individual who will destroy the works of the serpent at the cost of his own life.<sup>9</sup>

God’s proto-evangelism plan is the first promise of salvation: “I will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will strike your head and you will strike His heel” (Genesis 3:15). With the call and choosing of Abraham God was preparing to bless the world through Abraham’s seed (Genesis 12:1-3). Isaac, Jacob, and then the nation of Israel are the designated heir posterity of Abraham. Pettus clearly pointed out that Abraham and his descendants are in the crosshairs to the fulfillment of the Genesis promise of a Savior. He wrote quoting from the article, *The Skull Crushing Seed of the Woman: Inner-Biblical interpretation of Genesis 3:15* by James Hamilton, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies at Harvard School for Theological Studies, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Houston, Texas.

Hamilton’s detailed work tracing the trajectory of Genesis 3:15 from its inception into the New Testament draws the same conclusion. As he puts it, ‘in my view, the seed promise of Genesis 3 gave rise to the hope for one who would restore an

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<sup>8</sup> Pettus, “Reading a Protoevangelium in the Context of Genesis.”

<sup>9</sup> Pettus, “Reading a Protoevangelium in the Context of Genesis.”

edenic state (cf. Genesis 3:17 with 5:29). Genesis then carefully traces a line of male descent to Abraham in the genealogies of chapter 5 and 11 . . . The promises to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 and elsewhere (especially the royal promises in Genesis 17:6, 16; 49:9-11) are then layered onto the earlier ones beginning from Genesis 3:15.’<sup>10</sup>

The Scriptures revealed that Israel is the light of the nation, the appointed vessel, the chosen servant, and the witness for Jehovah: “My witnesses, says the LORD, are you, My servants, you whom I have chosen to know me and put your faith in Me and understand that I am He? Before Me there was no god fashioned nor ever shall be after Me. I am the LORD, I, Myself, and none but I shall deliver” (Isaiah 43:10-11). Israel, and David’s seed in particular, is the chosen vehicle-nation that the Lord used to bless the nations. Israel is God’s treasure, God’s “special delight, a royal priest hood, and a holy nation” through whom three unique theological teachings are declared to the world. They are first, Monotheism, “Hear O Israel, the LORD thy God is One” (Deuteronomy 6:4). Second, the Hebrew Scriptures, inspired, persevered, protected and handed down intact and unchanged in its teachings and precepts through many generations. And three, the Jewish Messiah and world Deliverer is the promised seed of the woman (Genesis 3), and David’s Son who will bring universal knowledge and salvation. “For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:13).

Israel was faithless, disloyal, and adulterous to the Lord, but its failure did not nullify or thwart God’s unconditional promises and plan of worldwide redemption. The Scriptural covenants, conditional and unconditional, are the biblical foundations for world evangelization and blessing. The conditional agreements were that blessings,

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<sup>10</sup> Pettus, “Reading a Protoevangelium in the Context of Genesis.”

wholeness, and prosperity were dependent on man's compliance with God's commands and instructions. Conditional covenants were stated in the "if...then terminology": "If you do this ... then I will." Unconditional agreements were exclusively in the domain of God's sovereignty, power and supreme purpose. An unconditional promise is stated in "I will..." language; He will do it without any human assistance, compliance, or fidelity. As promised and prophesied, the Messiah came "in the fullness of time" (Galatians 4:4). Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has come near, repent, and believe in the good news." The Apostle John declared, "He came unto his own, but his own people did not receive him" (John 1:11). As Jesus was departing from His disciples for heaven, He was asked, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" This suggests that the kingdom offered by the Lord was rejected by the Jews or that it was postponed until a future time. Later, Paul addressed Israel's national apostasy in Romans 9-11. He commented that Israel's unbelief led to their rejection and worldwide dispersion by God. In this present dispensation, God is saving and maintained a small believing remnant of the nation. It will not be until they confess their national and personal sin along with their rejection of Jesus Christ at His First Coming, and finally welcoming their Messiah at His Second Coming will Jesus establish the Millennial Kingdom which will spread universal blessings, salvation, and peace. "Look! He is coming with the cloud; every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail" (Revelations 1:7). "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3:6). Roger Shinn

quoted J. C. Hoekendijk, “The kerygma of the early Christians did not know of a redemptive act of God that was not directed toward the whole world.”<sup>11</sup>

### **Christology’s Impact on Evangelism**

Owen Thomas and Ellen Wondra writing on Christology stated that the doctrine of Christ is not fragmented or isolated from systematic theology but is the basis of the whole. The person and work of Christ is fundamental to understand and form a biblical interpretation of the doctrines of the Trinity, Christian anthropology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. The authors continued by quoting two theologians: “Dogmatics must actually be Christology and only Christology,” Karl Barth and “If we have not a sound Christology, we cannot have a sound theology either,” Donald Baillie.<sup>12</sup>

The message of the Gospel is called good news because it proclaims He came to call sinners to repentance and to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). According to James Montgomery Boice, “Calvary and not Bethlehem is the center of Christianity.”<sup>13</sup> Amplifying this theme, J. I. Packer wrote, “The crucial significance of the cradle at Bethlehem lies in its place in the sequence of steps down that led the Son of God to the cross of Calvary, and we do not understand it till we see it in this context.”<sup>14</sup> He came “to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives”... “Recovery of sight to

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<sup>11</sup> Roger L Shinn, *New Directions in Theology Today: Volume VI Man: The New Humanism* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1952), 56.

<sup>12</sup> Owen Thomas and Ellen Wondra, *Introduction to Theology* (New York, NY: Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 158.

<sup>13</sup> James Montgomery Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 291.

<sup>14</sup> James I. Packer, *Knowing God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 51.

the blind” ... “To let the oppressed go free” ... “To proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:16-18; Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:8-9). The Christmas message is “unto us is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11).

The city of David is Jerusalem where the Roman Empire ruled with an iron hand even though they had allowed the Jews some religious autonomy with their Temple worship, without demanding emperor worship. The Jews held firmly to the teachings of the Torah and would not compromise its monotheism. They opposed the Roman guards, colors statues and paraphernalia that suggest the polytheistic and syncretic religious acceptance from other parts of the Roman Empire. This was the strategy that held the Empire together. But the Jewish intense and deeply held monotheistic and messianic beliefs stood firm in the world surrounded by pagan practices and heathenism.

As Judaism emerged from the Babylonian conquest and exile, it inherited the stress of Israelite religion on monotheism: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one . . .” (Deuteronomy 6:4). God’s name, Yahweh, had become too holy to pronounce, being substituted with *Adonai* (“lord”). According to Genesis 15 and 17, God had made an agreement, or covenant, with Abraham that the land of Canaan would be given to Abraham and his descendants. A sign, circumcision of every male child, had sealed this agreement. The covenant meant that the Jews believed themselves to be the special people of God, his elect or chosen people, with a mission to become “a light to the nations.”<sup>15</sup>

The special (salvific) revelation of God is through the written Hebrew Scriptures and Jesus. Of the Scriptures, “It is declared”, “it is they that testify on my behalf,” said Jesus (John 5:39; see also 2 Timothy 3:16; 1Peter 1:21; Hebrews 1:2). Of the Incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, it is written, “Who is the image of the invisible God,” and “For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,” (Colossians 1:15, 19; see also John 1:1, 14; I John 1: 1-3; Hebrews 1:2). Jesus Christ is the Father’s Evangelist and Missionary for

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<sup>15</sup> James Tabor, *The Jewish Roman World of Jesus*, 2019, Dr. Tabor, dtabor@unc.edu.

Jesus declared, “And this is eternal life that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” (John 17:3)

“In the fullness of time God sent forth His son, born of a woman” is how the apostle Paul described the advent of Israel’s messiah (Galatians 4:4-5). That “fullness” was God sovereign ordering the strands of human history, including politics, tranquility, religious yearnings and social order to culminate in the birth of the Incarnate Divine Son of God in Bethlehem’s manger. To the unbelieving Jewish nation, the Birth of Israel’s Messiah was a stumbling block and to the Greeks this was foolishness (I Corinthians 1:18). The Jews looked for a political deliverer and the Greeks desire a perfect man.

Evans and Porter in the *Dictionary of the New Testament Background* stated:

The idea that Jesus is “anointed” of God and that therefore He is the Messiah is everywhere attested in the New Testament, so much so in the epistles, especially the Pauline Epistles, that “Christ” becomes a quasi name, not just a title... The epithet “King of the Jews” played no role in early Christian confession or Christology; nor does it reflect Jewish messianism (cf. Mark 15:32). The epithet is Roman, and its appearance in the crucifixion scene is historical, arguing strongly that by the time of Jesus had entered Jerusalem his disciples were speaking of him as Israel’s Messiah.<sup>16</sup>

This Jewish Messiah is the “Light of the world” (John 9:5); “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness-on them light has shined” (Isaiah 9:2; Matthew 4:15-16). The Incarnation is the unfathomable teaching that this Jewish Messiah is God made man, God-Man. Regarding the Son of God, The Athanasian Creed states:

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believes rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man of the substance of his Mother, born in the world; Perfect God and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul

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<sup>16</sup> Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, ed, *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 704.



and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood; Who, although he be God and Man, yet he is not two, but one Christ; One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh but by taking of the Manhood into God; One altogether; not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ; who suffered for our salvation.<sup>17</sup>

The incarnated, redeeming, risen and ascended Christ is the Head of the Church, directing, protecting and focusing it towards the accomplishment of its mission, and energized by the Holy Spirit. The Church is invisible in Christ, yet visible in the world; it is universal, all believers everywhere, and yet local, where two or three are gathered in His name. The local church wherever it gathers shares a common life, faithful testimony, mutual fellowship and home and foreign mission.

### **Pneumatology is Critical for Effective Evangelism**

Pneumatology comes from the words *pneum* (wind/spirit) and *ology* (study of) and refers to the study of the Holy Spirit (*pneuma hagion*).<sup>18</sup> Pneumatology, says Evans and Porter, is associated with prophecy, inspired exegesis, creation, purity, conversion, initiation and an eschatological figure, the Messiah.<sup>19</sup> The person, character, and work of the Holy Spirit are manifestly recorded in the evangelistic and church planting ministries as demonstrated in Acts 16. Some theologians and scholars have posited with some merit that in the Old Testament, God the Father was the prominent and significant person of the Trinity, active in the world as manifested in such acts as creation, the flood, choosing

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<sup>17</sup> Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom: With a History and a Critical Notes*, Vol. II, ed. David S. Schaff (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 68-69.

<sup>18</sup> Evans and Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 507.

<sup>19</sup> Evans and Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 507.

Abraham, destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, delivering Israel from Egyptian bondage, giving of the law at Sinai, and so forth. In the Gospels and New Testament world, God the Son was the active Agent on the scene specifically, the incarnation, teaching and miracles, crucifixion and resurrection. The Third Person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, is the leading Person in the age of the Church. Jesus said, “I will ask the Father and He will give you another advocate... I will not leave you orphaned... when the Advocate (Comforter) is come whom I will send to you...the Spirit of truth...” (John 14:25, 18; 15:26. And then with the birth of the Church on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), the Holy Spirit is the prominent active person in the world, convicting it of “sin, righteousness and judgment.” In his ascension to heaven the disciples were given the promise of power of the Spirit, thereby empowered and anointed as witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Timothy Keller wrote the Holy Spirit is a “Comforter”, a “Counselor” a “Helper”, and an “Advocate.”<sup>20</sup> Keller continued,

Advocate, a legal word, sometimes used for an attorney who represents you in court. The Greek work in this case is the word *paraklete* is a noun, the verb form being *parakaleo*. *Kaleo* means to call or direct someone. *Para* means to come alongside. It means to come alongside in order to support. To ‘come alongside’ means to be sympathetic, to be in a relationship, to stand in someone’s shoes. This word is a union of prophetic challenge and priestly support.<sup>21</sup>

For New Testament Christians, Pneumatology involves the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13); Receiving the Holy Spirit with Him permanently indwelling them; The Filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18); The Gifts, enabling abilities, of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12, 14, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4). The study of pneumatology is relevant to the Church as it plays a vital role as the Comforter (John

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<sup>20</sup> Timothy Keller, *Encounters with Jesus* (New York, NY: Dutton, 2013), 131.

<sup>21</sup> Keller, *Encounters with Jesus*, 131.

16:7) and Assistant in intercessory prayer (Romans 8:26). In the Church's work of evangelism and outreach, the Holy Spirit's ministry is paramount for effectiveness, power, and sustainability.

### **Ecclesiology Ties to the Ministry of Evangelism**

The great hymn of the Church, written by Samuel J. Stone (1839-1900), and its music composed by Charles Wesley, captures the forte, dynamic life, and spirit of the demonstrative and overcoming Church of the new age in magnificent language. The author quotes the following parts from this poem, *The Church's One Foundation*.

The Church's one foundation  
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord;  
She is His new creation  
By water and the Word.  
From heaven He came and sought her  
To be His holy bride;  
With His own blood He bought her,  
And for her life He died.  
Elect from every nation,  
Yet one o'er all the earth,  
Her charter of salvation  
One Lord, one faith, one birth.  
The Church shall never perish!  
Her dear Lord, to defend,  
To guide, sustain, and cherish,  
Is with her to the end.  
Mid toil and tribulation  
And tumult of her war  
She waits the consummation  
Of peace forevermore,  
Til with the vision glorious  
Her longing eyes are blest  
And the great Church victorious  
Shall be the Church at rest.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Samuel J. Stone, *The United Methodist Hymnal, Book of the United Methodist Worship* (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989), 545.

The future Church of the New Testament was predicted by Christ in Matthew 16:18 which states, “I will build My Church, and the gates of hades will not prevail against it.” This new institution and organism is New Creation of God in Christ, not identical to the chosen nation of Israel, but patterned in like manner and language as “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;...which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God” (1Peter 2:9-10; Exodus 19:6; Deuteronomy 7:6; 10:15).” Several other New Testament colorful pictures are used to express the church’s intimate, vital, and personal relationship and standing with Christ. Paul Minear lists ninety-six figures of speech in his book, *Images of the Church in the New Testament*, such as wife of Christ, The Firstborn of Christ, and the Flock.<sup>23</sup>

Swindoll and Zuck stated that “The English word church comes from the Greek word *kyriakos*, which occurs only twice in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 11:20; Revelations 1:10).”<sup>24</sup> Erickson defines *kyriakos* to mean “belonging to the Lord.”<sup>25</sup> Swindoll and Zuck further stated:

*Ekklesia* is derived from two words that together mean ‘to call out.’ First used in antiquity to refer to the assembly of citizens of a city, the word is used in the New Testament to refer to the church. In the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, *ekklesia* occurs one hundred times. The word was used to translate the Hebrew term *qahal*. More often, however, the term *synagoge* was used to translate *qahal*. In the Old Testament *ekklesia* indicates an assembly (Deuteronomy 9:10; 23:3; Micah 2:5) or a political body (Ezra 10:8, 12; Nehemiah 8:2, 17). In 2 Chronicles 6:3 it refers to the gathering of Israelites for the consecration of the temple. From the word itself no claim may be made for the

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<sup>23</sup> Paul Sevier Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1960), 28.

<sup>24</sup> Charles R. Swindoll and Roy B. Zuck, *Understanding Christian Theology* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 1085.

<sup>25</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 1030.

existence of the church in the Old Testament.<sup>26</sup>

Since the setting aside of national Israel, God has grafted gentiles into the vine, true believing Israel. According to Paul in Ephesians 2 and 5, the wall of separation between Jews and Gentiles is broken down; the curtain or veil of the temple is torn for top to bottom by no human hands, and the national messiah is the universal savior. Receiving the benefits of the redemptive work of Christ on the cross through the operative grace of the Holy Spirit creates a union between believers and Christ. Louis Berkhof wrote, “The union between Christ and believers is affected by the Holy Spirit in a mysterious and supernatural way, and for that reason is generally designated as a mystical union.”<sup>27</sup> The division and distinctions between Jews and Gentiles no longer exist since “in Christ” there is no division (unity), no racial or ethnic differences, and no gender or religious distinctions. This was a mystery under the old Abrahamic Covenant but is now an unfolding secret. So, the promise of universal blessing predicted through Abraham’s seed was fulfilled in Jesus (Savior) and Christ (King): “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring (seed); it does not say, ‘and to offsprings,’ as of many; but it says ‘And to your offspring,’ that is, to one person, who is Christ” (Galatians 2:16).

Jesus used *ekklesia* in Matthew 16:18, referring to the church as still future, “I will build my church”, and in Matthew 18:17, as a local body of Christians who in the future would need to exercise church discipline.<sup>28</sup> From an evangelical perspective, the

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<sup>26</sup> Swindoll and Zuck, *Understanding Christian Theology*, 1085.

<sup>27</sup> Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 447.

<sup>28</sup> Swindoll and Zuck, *Understanding Christian Theology*, 1085.

New Testament Church was birthed on the day of Pentecost and the present church as universal on earth dealing with constant spiritual conflicts and advancing the gospel witness, and will culminate in the Rapture, the future church as Triumphant with all believers in heaven (Acts 2 and 1 Thessalonians 4).<sup>29</sup> Chafer stated that according to 1 Corinthians 12:13 that, “It is impossible to be saved and not be a member of the church which is Christ’s own body.”<sup>30</sup> The New Testament Church consists of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized in the Trinitarian formula, committed to each other in love and called out of this world into a worshipping, caring, and witnessing fellowship.<sup>31</sup> There are four marks or qualities of the Church according to Erickson. They are unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity.<sup>32</sup>

J. I. Packer wrote, “Paul, in Ephesians, pictures the Church successively as Christ’s building, now growing unto ‘an holy temple in the Lord’; His body, now growing toward a state of full edification; and His bride, now being sanctified and cleansed in readiness for the ‘marriage supper of the Lamb.’”<sup>33</sup> The New Testament writers, especially Paul, employed several images to discuss, interpret, and explain the concept (form), purpose (function), and mission of the Church. The teaching that all believers are “in Christ” (Galatians 3:28) is expressive of and referring to “Paul’s

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<sup>29</sup> Swindoll and Zuck, *Understanding Christian Theology*, 1088.

<sup>30</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Major Bible Themes, 52 Vital Doctrines of the Scripture Simplified and Explained* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1974), 240.

<sup>31</sup> Swindoll and Zuck, *Understanding Christian Theology*, 1086.

<sup>32</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1985.

<sup>33</sup> James I. Packer, *Serving the People of God* (London, UK: Paternoster Press, 1998), 6.

corporate Christology.”<sup>34</sup> There is a “new identity and distinct obligations”<sup>35</sup> to both Jews and Gentiles who are united as the new people of God. Horrell and Tuckett postulated that the oneness or unity that exists in Christ and the Christian community is vividly and brilliantly captured in the baptism and the Lord’s Supper: “Baptism initiates and the Lord’s Supper celebrates” the community as the body of Christ.<sup>36</sup> The unity is expressed and “comes from agreement of faith, of hope and of charity.”<sup>37</sup> The Church is holy being purchased by the precious blood of Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit and sanctified by the Father.

In addressing the ministry of the Church in the world, James I. Packer wrote that the Church is:

A ministering people, all its members holding in trust from Christ gifts of ministry (that is, service) for the edifying of the one body. Within the context of this universal ministry, Christ calls some specifically to minister the gospel, giving them strength and skill for their task and blessing their labors. As spokesmen and representatives of Christ, teaching and applying His Word, church officers exercise His authority; yet they need to remember that, as individuals, they belong to the church as its servants, not the church to them as their empire. The church is Christ’s kingdom, not theirs.<sup>38</sup>

The Church serves many purposes in the world. It is destined to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21), to manifest Christ’s life, character, and headship, to edify itself within its fellowship, and to evangelize the world (Matthew 28:16-20). Church growth and

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<sup>34</sup> David Horrell and Christopher M. Tuckett, ed., *Christology, Controversy and Community: New Testament Essays in Honor of David R. Catchpole* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2000), 324.

<sup>35</sup> Horrell and Tuckett, *Christology, Controversy and Community*, 322.

<sup>36</sup> Horrell and Tuckett, *Christology, Controversy and Community*, 328.

<sup>37</sup> Peter Hodgson and Robert H. King, *Readings in Christian Theology* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1985), 240.

<sup>38</sup> Packer, *Serving the People of God*, 7.

evangelism are thus intertwined. As witnessing intentionally takes place and genuine conversions occur the universal and local church expands. The Ascended Head has bestowed numerous spiritual gifts and graces that are evident in the advancement and expansion of the global church. The gifts have a threefold classification as speaking gifts (as exemplified in teaching), serving gifts (such as helps), and sign gifts (like working of miracles). With these Spirit endowments and enablement, the Church is described as a Mighty Army by the 19th-century English hymn, *Onward, Christian Soldiers, Marching as to War*. Sabine Baring-Gould in 1865 wrote, and the music was composed by Arthur Sullivan in 1871:

Like a mighty army  
 moves the church of God;  
 Brothers, we are treading  
 where the saints have trod;  
 We are not divided;  
 all one body we,  
 One in hope and doctrine,  
 one in charity.<sup>39</sup>

The Church remains a strong “Fortress” standing against the attacks of the enemy, and at the same time advance the cause of Christ, delivering souls and building the Kingdom of God.

### **Practical Theology Embraces Evangelism**

The term Practical Theology suggests the application of biblical teachings and principles to life’s relevant and urgent circumstances. As a discipline of theological education, Practical Theology consists of the core foundational and fundamental purpose

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<sup>39</sup> Sabine Baring-Gould, *Onward Christian Soldiers, Marching as to War* (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989), 575.



of preaching, teaching and counseling, lifting up the Savior for all to see. Preaching is the art and skill of delivering the Gospel effectively, intentionally and with practical applications. The design of a constructive and consistent message, and the development of an organized presentation demands a faithful exegesis of the text. This is referred to in Scripture as rightly, dividing and explaining the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15).

Delivery or articulating with discernment requires a skill set that follows much practice and prayer. Prophetic preaching consists of instruction, exhortation, and edification that flesh out the truths embedded in the text.

Teaching is the process of imparting knowledge. In Scripture teaching in the Church is significant and is a gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed to the church whereby biblical truths are conveyed, communicated and imparted with special anointing (Ephesians 4:11-16). The methods of the teaching are varied but the goal is transmitting divine truth that transforms lives and destiny of individuals, society and nations. The setting for theological education is diverse and takes place most prominently in the home (Deuteronomy 6:4-9), schools, and places of worship.

The concept of biblical counseling is a process or a single point in time when biblical truths are applied to the undercurrents of life’s problems, events or pertinent situations. Counseling can be delivered in diverse capacities, but it principally takes the form of professional and confidential advice and support, or it can be a pastoral care ministry of intervention when requested and perceived as needed. Counseling should be offered in love of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, who is a discerner of the intents of the human heart and who gives discernment and direction to life’s condition. The preeminence of the word of God with the counselor’s knowledge and insights of some

secular disciplines as secondary sources such as psychology, psychiatry, biology, history, and sociology, offers a balance understanding of life with its problems, and a guiding light and a prospect of hope. The range of areas touches all human relationships and interaction, including but not limited to love, sex, marriage, death and dying, depression, anxiety, and the host of conditions.

Pastoral Theology, with its components of preaching, teaching and counseling, is a relevant and meaningful instrument that the pastor or Christian minister can effectively utilize to evangelize. The sole purpose of the Great Commission is making disciples and teaching them to observe all things Christ has commanded. This is the mission and purpose of the Church as the *ekklesia* of God, empowered by the Holy Spirit (*pneuma hagion*), honoring Christ who is Son of God and Son of Man and also designated Messiah, Lord and Savior, and expounded in the entire inspired Holy Scripture. This theological foundation is sure, solid and eternal.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

#### Introduction

*The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines pedagogy as a word that refers to the art, science, or profession of teaching, and especially to the field of study that deals mainly with methods of teaching and learning in schools.<sup>1</sup> A teacher who communicates well and interests the class in the subject matter is engaging in pedagogy, as the grad student who is studying about classroom behavior. The students are pupils of *pedagogues*. The Greek verb *agogos*, means “leader”, because a *paidagogos* in Greek was one who lead children to school. (Demagogue, on the other hand, refers to a leader of the people *demos* in Greek). *Demagogue* in English came to be used of a leader who manipulates to gain power. The word carries the idea of “attendance on boys, to lead a child.”<sup>2</sup> In time, *pedagogue* came to mean simply “teacher.” The history of pedagogy and the role of ‘teacher’ can be traced back to Ancient Greece, with Socrates in the 5th Century BC as the keystone of what we now consider to be “modern education.” The word was coined around circa 1623. The German philosopher and founder of pedagogy as

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<sup>1</sup> *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v., “pedagogy,” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pedagogy>.

<sup>2</sup> *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v., “pedagogy.”

an academic discipline stated that pedagogy comprises of the following five elements: preparation, presentation, association, generalization, and application.<sup>3</sup> Writing on the *Philosophy of Learning* and the nature of learning, Michael D. Fiorello wrote: *The Random House College Dictionary* defines learning as acquiring “knowledge or skill by study, instruction or experience.” Some people learn best when they see what is being taught while others process information auditorily, something that is related to hearing. Some need movement and touch to complete their learning process. Hence, a multi-sensory approach to teaching is best.<sup>4</sup>

However, the methods and practice of, and the implementation of teaching practices, and delivery may vary from teacher to teacher, teaching preferences, the teacher’s experience, content of the curriculum, learning environment, and students’ ability and capacity. *Times Educational Supplement (tes)*, a weekly British supplement of *The Times* newspaper had an article detailing the different pedagogical approaches which could be broken down into four categories: behaviourism, constructivism, social constructivism, and liberationist.<sup>5</sup>

According to *Times Educational Supplement (tes)*, the behaviourist pedagogy uses the theory of behaviourism to inform its approach. A behaviourist pedagogical approach would say learning is teacher centered. It would advocate the use of direct instruction, and lecture-based lessons. In this theory the teacher is the sole authority figure imparting knowledge and leading the lesson, using a mixture of visible and

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<sup>3</sup> *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v., “pedagogy.”

<sup>4</sup> Michael D. Fiorello, “Philosophy of Learning,” Unpublished article, December 15, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> *Times Educational Supplement (tes)*, <https://www.tes.com/news/what-is-pedagogy-definition>.

structured activities such as lecturing, modeling and demonstration, rote learning and choral repetition.<sup>6</sup>

With the Constructivism theory, also called “invisible pedagogy,” and described as a progressive teaching style, people learn through experiences and reflection. It places the child or student at the center of the learning process. A constructivist approach is where the teacher initiates and incorporates students’ activities, work projects, group activities, individual research, and exploration as exemplified and adopted by Montessori schools.<sup>7</sup>

Social constructivism pedagogy is a combination of and a collaborative process between student and teacher approaches. “The teacher would use group work elements, but would use smaller group sizes, and limit the choice in topics. The teacher might also use teacher modelling, questioning, and a mixture of individual, pair, and whole class instruction.”<sup>8</sup>

Liberationism is a critical pedagogy developed by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire who taught illiterate adults to read in forty-five days. Freire focused on removing the two perceived barriers to learning: poverty and hunger. In his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire wrote about the dehumanization of students in schools, and argued for cooperation and unity where students may take on the role of the teacher and decide upon the topic of the lesson. The teacher should provide space and opportunity for the students

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<sup>6</sup> *Times Educational Supplement (tes)*, <https://www.tes.com/news/what-is-pedagogy-definition>.

<sup>7</sup> *Times Educational Supplement (tes)*, <https://www.tes.com/news/what-is-pedagogy-definition>.

<sup>8</sup> *Times Educational Supplement (tes)*, <https://www.tes.com/news/what-is-pedagogy-definition>.

to showcase their learning, and this can take the form of a performance, speech, or dance. Together, students and teacher make discoveries and learn from each other.<sup>9</sup>

### **Biblical insight into Pedagogy**

Turning to the Scriptures and surveying its contents, one is impressed by the pedagogy principles and elements already outlined: preparation, presentation, association, generalization, and application. The Israelites were to keep the words commanded, recite them, talk of them at home and on a journey (way), speak them when they lie down and rise up, bind them on the hands, fix them as an emblem on the forehead, and write them on doorposts of houses and on the gates (Deuteronomy 6:6-9). This Jewish tradition of teaching and learning survived generations of national calamities, exiles, civil wars, destructive forces, and enemy's retaliation. In the New Testament the synagogue, temple, and homes were centers of learning. Paul learned at the feet of Gamaliel, Timothy was instructed at home by his mother and grandmother, and the early church met in house-churches, the synagogue and places of public gathering and used all opportunities to facilitate the teaching about Jesus.

The early church followed Jesus, their Master, who never missed an opportunity, whether that is on the streets of Palestine, in the corn fields, at a well, at a grave site, and so forth to dispense the message of the kingdom of God and discipleship. In obedience to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20), the apostles were "making disciples...baptizing ... teaching them to obey everything I, Jesus, have commanded you." The Church was tasked with teaching the head, heart and mind; training and

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<sup>9</sup> *Times Educational Supplement (tes)*, <https://www.tes.com/news/what-is-pedagogy-definition>.

transforming life with intention to reduplicate and multiply itself as a living organism and organized community.

The principles of pedagogy are the means whereby life and mission of the Church and my project of The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Educational Outreach Ministry-Bridge to the Caribbean not only intersect but are intimately intertwined. The New Testament teaches that the Risen Christ distributed the gift of teachers/teaching as a special anointed enablement to the Church. “He gave gifts to His people...The gifts He gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up of the body of Christ until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ” (Ephesians 4:8b, 11-13). In Romans 12 Paul writes “We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; in teacher, in teaching (6-7). Then as an example of the importance and transformative influence that teaching possesses, Paul told Timothy: “What you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well” (II Timothy 2:2). These passages show the significance that teachers and the teaching process have in Christian ministry. Just like Jesus, Bible instructors must teach with love, humility, and power, and possessing knowledge, reverence and self-control.

The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Educational Outreach Ministry-Bridge to the Caribbean is intended to implement the principles of pedagogy in communicating biblical truths through evangelism seminars to pastors and lay leaders who are willing and eager to engage their churches and communities with the message of hope and life.

Also, the intention is to develop and integrate the curriculum of biblical institutions of learning and addressing their assessed needs for training and mentoring godly and effective future church leaders. The Macedonia Call is to also address some social and financial needs as necessary, appropriate and feasible. The purpose is to engage the head, the heart and the hand in Christian mission and education.

### **The Teaching Methods of Jesus**

Jesus was the Master-Teacher. After a general reading of the Gospels, one leaves with the impression that Jesus was more of a teacher than a preacher. In a paper honoring Doctor Father, Edgar Krentz, Marie Noel Keller writes, “Jesus is addressed as Lord no fewer than 83 times and as rabbi or teacher 56 times. The next most frequently used title for Jesus is the enigmatic Son of man found no fewer than 37 times.”<sup>10</sup> Generally, a teacher is held in high respect and honor. Keller states that Jesus is found “teaching multitudes (Matthew 5-7); individuals (John 3 and 4); adversaries (Luke 15), and disciples (Mark 4:10-20, 33-34; 7:17-23; 10:10-11, 23-31). He teaches in the temple (Matthew 26:55; Mark 14:19; John 7:14); in synagogues (Matthew 4:23; Mark 6:2; Luke 4:15; John 6:59); in houses (Mark 7:17-18; 9:28); from a boat (Luke 5:3); on the hillside (Matthew 5:1-2); at a well (John 4:7-30); at table (Luke 7:36-50); on the road (Luke 24:13-32); and by the [sea]shore Mark 2:13\4:1). In other words, Jesus teaches people wherever he is and wherever they are.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Marie Noel Keller, *Jesus the Teacher*, Published online: 01 Dec 2009, 19-36, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219809484859>.

<sup>11</sup> Keller, *Jesus the Teacher*, 19-36.



So, the four Gospels are filled with His teaching techniques, skills, originality, and unique presentation and application of divine truths. It is said that there are four types of teachers during Jesus' lifetime, and He drew upon the philosophers, sages, interpreters of the Jewish Law, and prophets without diluting his message of the Kingdom of God.

<sup>12</sup> Jesus taught with authority, purpose and conviction (Mark 1:22). The gospels reveal that Jesus stands with authority, and emphatically proclaims "You have heard it said... but I say to you..." (Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 33-3). Jesus assumes and asserts His authority as a teacher. Keller further stated,

Jesus teaches in the imperative mood and not in the participial form that was customary among rabbis. Finally, Jesus is more than an interpreter of the law. Whereas rabbis exhausted biblical texts so that their students could interpret them, Jesus saw himself not only as an interpreter of a text but as the very embodiment of it.<sup>13</sup>

Other teachers robed themselves with and into traditions and quoted other masters of religion and philosophy to bolster their teachings. They have derived authority since they support their statements by calling on the authority of the past. Additionally, Jesus was an exceptional and different teacher. In rabbinic literature, rabbis are not depicted traveling around as Jesus did to find people who would respond to his summons to become disciple-companions. Instead, the tradition emphasizes the initiative by individual people to receive permission from a rabbi to become one of his student-disciples. The stories that characterize the beginning of a teacher/disciple relationship, therefore, receive their plot from the struggle of a young man to gain acceptance by a

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<sup>12</sup> Keller, *Jesus the Teacher*, 19-36.

<sup>13</sup> Keller, *Jesus the Teacher*, 19-36.

rabbi rather than the action and summons of a rabbi to attain a response from a person whom he wants as a disciple companion.<sup>14</sup>

Stephen Jones stated that “rabbis carefully interviewed and screened prospective disciples because their stature was in large part determined by the impressiveness of their disciples.”<sup>15</sup>

Discipleship on Jesus' terms, however, is a different matter. First, the Gospels attest to the fact that Jesus' disciples do not choose him. Rather, he “seeks them out and calls” them in the midst of their everyday activities (Mark 1:17; 2:14; Matthew 4:19; 9:9; cf. Luke 5:10-11, 27-28; John 1:35-51). In addition, Jesus selects individuals who may not be the most worthy or likely of prospects. Levi the tax-collector (Mark 2:13-17) is an example. Followers leave their homes, their relatives, and all their security.<sup>16</sup>

The words used to describe a disciple mean a “learner” and someone “who to walk behind” or “to follow after.” Moreover, Stephen Jones in his book, *Rabbi Jesus: Learning from the Master Teacher*, described a disciple and what discipleship means in the first century. So, the relationship between Jesus and his followers parallel the rabbinic pupils to their masters. Jones wrote:

Learning by itself did not make a pupil, and he did not grasp the full significance of his teacher's learning in all its nuances except through prolonged intimacy with his teacher, through close association with his rich and profound mind. The disciples accompanied their sage as he went to teach, when he sat in law court, when he was engaged in the performance of meritorious deeds such as helping the poor, redeeming slaves, collecting dowries for poor brides, burying the dead, etc. The pupil took his turn preparing the common meal and catering to the general needs of the group. He performed personal services for his teacher, observed his conduct and was his respectful, loving companion. Some laws could not be studied theoretically or merely discussed, but could only be learned by

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<sup>14</sup> Vernon Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1984), 101.

<sup>15</sup> Stephen D. Jones, *Rabbi Jesus: Learning from the Master Teacher* (Macon, GA: Peake Road, 1997), 34-35.

<sup>16</sup> Keller, *Jesus the Teacher*, 19-36.

serving the teacher. The groups which consisted of a sage and his disciples had property in common, or a common fund from which food was brought. Study was not confined to the school or the synagogue, but was also carried on in the vineyard, in the shade of the dovecote, in fields, on paths under fig-trees and olives and in the market. It was not uncommon for the sage to conduct discourses and discussions with his pupils in the town square or in the market place, with the townspeople gathering around them and listening, irrespective of whether they were able to understand all or only part of the discussion.<sup>17</sup>

The disciples of Jesus spent an enormous time with Him. They not only gathered information, they daily lived alongside Him, and observed his every move, and dealing with groups and individuals across a broad spectrum of society. That rubbed off on them, transforming them to where those who observed them after Jesus' death called them Christians. They were not imitators; they were transformed by His life, relationship, and teachings.

Jesus as Teacher-Rabbi applied various means and mediums such as exaggerated statements or overstatement whereby He “sought to capture the attention of His listeners by overstating a truth in such a way that the resulting exaggeration forcefully brought home the point He was attempting to make.”<sup>18</sup> Michael England lists several other strategies and techniques that the Master-Teacher employed to affect life transforming outcomes in His audience.

Warschauer remarked about the dynamic teaching, and some methods that Jesus effectively employed. His teachings bear the mark, not of prepared addresses, but of inspired impromptus, flashes of wayside wisdom called forth by wayside incidents,

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<sup>17</sup> Jones, *Rabbi Jesus*, 19.

<sup>18</sup> Michael G. England, “An Analysis of Jesus Christ’s Personality, Methodology, and Teaching Style,” Thesis, Trinity Theological Seminary, 2002, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/261562464>.

striking illustrations and similes prompted by some actual situation, memorable epigrams, aphorisms, paradoxes, all of them revealing a highly original, individual mind, but at the farthest possible remove from a systematic treatment of the principles of either faith or conduct. Jesus was not a systematizer; but the words which he spoke were spirit and were life.<sup>19</sup>

Warschauer shared this wonderful insight about the circumstances of Jesus' pedagogy:

He was not a member of any institution. He had none of those institutional relations and helps which the modern teacher usually associates himself with. He was elected by no school board. He was not the subject of a body of trustees. He had no text-book. If the Hebrew Scriptures were very familiar to him, as they probably were, we have yet only a few records of his drawing from their texts for remark. His texts he found in the incidents of gladness and sadness, in the death and burial of a friend, in the request of a young man, in the suggestiveness of the farmer sowing seed, or of the growth of the crop or of the reaping of the harvest. The flight of a bird, the sight of a lily, the flash of a lamp in the temple, the flowing of a spring, were any one sufficient for him to speak words that will live in men's thoughts and on men's lips so long as the mind thinks, or as the heart feels or the tongue speaks. His lecture room was found in the street corner in Jerusalem, or in the fields of Galilee or on the mountain side in Samaria. He illustrates the truth of the remark that the teacher, the teacher, the teacher is more, infinitely more, than either the teaching or the circumstances of the teaching.<sup>20</sup>

Like other Jewish teachers, Jesus was adept at using questions at a pedagogy method (Matthew 22:20; Luke 10:25-26). Someone noted that in the synoptic gospels there are 187 times that Jesus answered a question. Stories and parables (Luke 15:3-32), a traditional Jewish way of teaching, are also part of Jesus' teaching arsenal. Jesus also decides like the rabbis did in matters of sin (John 9:1-2), marriage, divorce, and so forth.

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<sup>19</sup> J. Warschauer, "Jesus as a Teacher: Toward an Interpretation," *The American Journal of Theology* 23, no. 2 (1919): 146-149, [https:// www.jstor.org/stable/3155848](https://www.jstor.org/stable/3155848).

<sup>20</sup> Warschauer, "Jesus as a Teacher: Toward an Interpretation."

Finally, Jesus teaches through the favorite method of the rabbis, argumentation.”<sup>16</sup> “Is it,” they questioned, “That this man has learning, when he has never studied?” (John 7:15, cf. Matthew 13:54 and par.). Jesus’ credentials therefore are not derivative. They are autonomous.<sup>22</sup> He is a charismatic instructor.

Michael G. England offers the Forms and Techniques that Jesus Used as the Medium for His Message. They are listed with an example.

1. Overstatement or exaggeration: ‘If any one comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple’ (Luke 14:26).
2. Hyperbole: the gross exaggeration makes a literal fulfillment impossible, as in ‘. . . straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel’ (Matthew 23:23-24).
3. Pun: a play on words in which either homonym suggests two or more different meanings or the same word may have two different meanings. ‘And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church . . .’ The play on words in this saying is evident also in Greek, where the terms *petros* and *petra* are used respectively for ‘Peter’ and ‘rock,’ (Matthew 16:18).
4. Simile: a comparison between two things that are essentially unlike each other and that are introduced by a connective such as ‘like,’ ‘as,’ or ‘than’ or by a verb such as ‘seems.’ ‘Behold I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves’ (Matthew 10:16).
5. Metaphor: like a simile, is a comparison between two unlike things. In contrast to a simile, where an explicit comparison is made, the metaphor makes an implicit comparison, ‘Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod’ (Matthew 8:15).
6. Proverb: a terse pithy saying that contains in a striking manner a memorable statement. At times such a statement gives advice on moral behavior and becomes an ethical maxim. ‘For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also’ (Matthew 6:21).
7. Paradox: a statement that appears to be contradictory. ‘. . . Truly I say unto you, this poor widow had put in more than all those who are

contributing to the treasury . . .’ (Mark 12:41-44).

8. A Fortiori: Arguing from lesser to greater seems to have been a common way for Jesus to challenge thinking. An *a fortiori* statement is not so much a figure of speech as a type of argument in which the conclusion follows with even greater logical necessity than the already accepted fact or conclusion previously given. ‘Or what man of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him’ (Matthew 7:9-11).

9. The Use of Questions: Jesus used questions in a variety of ways and in a variety of situations. He used questions to draw out from His audience the correct answer. He also used a counter-question for argumentation. He also used it for rhetorical purposes (Mark 3:1-4).

10. Parable: figurative action(s) which fall into three groups (similitude, parable, and illustration).<sup>21</sup>

One of the most alluring qualities of Christ’s personality is that of originality, combined with his enthusiasm, wit, and conviction in His teaching ministry. Truth through life is the most powerful teaching method. When Jesus spoke, His audience took notice and wondered out loudly, “What manner of man is this?” That expression is found over thirty-five times in the gospels. England quoted R. Carter’s book, *The Eternal Teacher*, which states:

He (Jesus) came at a time when thinking was rutted and platitudinous, when people were convinced that what had been was good enough. They were bound to tradition. There was the law and there was the custom; who would dare think of an alteration by a jot or tittle? But into the midst of this decadence and perversion came Jesus with the most amazing roster of ideas. Again and again, when he had listened to feeble attempts at substantiating the wisdom and virtues of the past, he would reply with what we might imagine to be a conceding, ‘Very well,’ and then the resounding and definitive assertion that we find him reiterating so often, But I say unto you, followed by one of the most original of declaration.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> England, *An Analysis of Jesus Christ’s Personality, Methodology, and Teaching Style*.

<sup>22</sup> England, *An Analysis of Jesus Christ’s Personality, Methodology, and Teaching Style*.

### **Pedagogy as an Educational Tool**

The use of effective questions is a great type of pedagogy technique which solicits information, corrects misconception, and advances further research and serious analysis. In any academic discipline, asking the right questions is a central a part of the confirming, reflecting, expanding, and advancing specific knowledge, practice, and learning. Michelle Long, writing for *The American Academy of Pediatrics: Monthly Feature Pediatrics* in the 2015 stated, “When used strategically, questioning can engage learners by stimulating active participation in the learning process, guide them toward the understanding of deeper concepts, promote peer–peer collaboration, and build their confidence.”<sup>23</sup> Ill-prepared, impractical and ill –proposed questions can have a damaging and disquieting impact on learners and the learning process. Question that are designed and intended to trap, embarrass, or unrealistically raise tension or seem confrontational can also have problematic consequences and a humiliating effect whereby interest in learning, self-motivation and confidence are eroded.

Michelle Long again aptly advanced the thought that “Different learners and teaching situations” require different types of questions. One approach to effective questioning takes into consideration the developmental stage of the learner and the learning objectives best suited for the stage. The educator first classifies the developmental stage of the learner based on his or her competence, confidence, and

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<sup>23</sup> Michelle Long, “Questioning Teaching as a Tool,” *American Academy Pediatrics* 135, no. 3 (March 2015): 21, <https://www.pediatrics.org/cgi/doi/10.1542/pedss.2014-3285DOI:10.1542/peds.2014-3285>.

motivation.”<sup>24</sup> Drawing from the field of pediatrics, and clinicians in that field, Michelle Long agreed that there are four skills of learning. First, the novice primarily by using a limited rule-based knowledge system but can benefit most from simple questions focused on factual knowledge. Secondly, the advanced beginner has an expanded repertoire and may just be getting exposed to the learning environment. Additionally, he is working on linking facts he may have learned in isolation. Thirdly, the competent learner uses ground rules and is in the process of getting invested. And lastly, proficient learners show increasing initiative and are motivated to advance. The last two learning skills of the competent and proficient learners are applying information to common problems and situations, so questions can be more complex and prompt them to apply theoretical knowledge to a specific in the decision making process. Questions may also pose alternatives to what the learner proposed, followed by an exploration of their thought process.<sup>25</sup>

Skilled use of questions is an art form employed to promote the learning curve with minimum discomfort. Beginning with fact-based questions as a confidence building and knowledge assessment tool, without merely settling on “low level” rote memorization intended questions, experienced teachers move to more advance and constructive formats, asking open ended, complex, and dynamic questions where students are stimulated and challenged without intimidation to begin to acquire, strengthen, and sharpen their learning. Formulating knowledge enhancement and forward-thinking

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<sup>24</sup> Long, “Questioning Teaching as a Tool,” 21.

<sup>25</sup> Long, “Questioning Teaching as a Tool,” 21.



questions demands teachers give close attention to the formulation of questions.

Depending on the subject matter and learning environment, explorative questions can be asked, such as: Can you explain? Can you elaborate/expand? Can you tell us more? You have brought up a good point, can you give an example?

Mentoring from an educational perspective is another effective tool and approach to be reviewed in pedagogy. The author, Biddy Fisher, records the origin of mentoring, and its application in the library. He states how mentoring was applied historically by revealing the Greek version:

Mentoring is not a new concept. The first mention of it and the titular hero of this book was an ancient Greek, chosen by Odysseus Ulysses to look after his son, the young Telemachus while away on his epic voyage of discovery. There was more to the instruction than just keeping a paternal eye on the young man and grooming Telemachus for the eventual position as head of state was a priority. This was achieved through advising, encouraging and teaching, by providing counseling and a role model, and passing on the experience, which the older man possessed to the younger. It is also interesting to note that Greek mythology also allows for Mentors to be a woman and take the form appropriate to the situation via the goddess, Athena.<sup>26</sup>

According to Paul Stanley and J. Robert Clinton, mentoring is defined as a relational process between a mentor, who knows or has experienced something and transfers that something (resources of wisdom, information, experience, confidence, insights, relationships, status and so forth) to a mentoree at an appropriate time and manner, so that it facilitates development or empowerment.”<sup>27</sup> Today, we use the word

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<sup>26</sup> Biddy Fisher, *Mentoring* (London, UK: Liberty Association Publishing, 1994), 1.

<sup>27</sup> Paul Stanley and Robert Clinton, *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1992), 40.

mentor for anyone who is a positive, guiding influence in another (usually younger) person's life."<sup>28</sup>

In the article, *Five Standards of Effective Pedagogy*, from the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence, University of California, mentoring is described as learning in action, under the heading Joint Productive Activity; Teacher and Students Producing Together. The article stated that:

Learning occurs most effectively when experts and novices work together for a common product or goal and are therefore motivated to assist one another. 'Providing assistance' is the general definition of teaching; thus, joint productive activity (JPA) maximizes teaching and learning. Working together allows conversation, which teaches language, meaning, and values in the context of immediate issues. Teaching and learning through 'joint productive activity' is cross-cultural, typically human, and probably 'hard-wired.' This kind of 'mentoring' and 'learning in action' is characteristic of parents with very young children.<sup>29</sup>

In mentoring the role of the teacher is significant. There is an eight-fold task of the mentor-teacher that *Five Standards of Effective Pedagogy* mentioned. The mentor-teacher:

1. Designs instructional activities requiring student collaboration to accomplish a joint product.
2. Matches the demands of the joint productive activity to the time available for accomplishing them.
3. Arranges classroom seating to accommodate students' individual and group needs to communicate and work jointly.
4. Participates with students in joint productive activity.
5. Organizes students in a variety of groupings, such as by friendship, mixed academic ability, language, project, or interests, to promote interaction.
6. Plans with students how to work in groups and move from one activity to another, such as from large group introduction to small group activity, for clean-up, dismissal, and the like.
7. Manages student and teacher access to materials and technology to facilitate joint

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<sup>28</sup> Merriam Webster Dictionary, s.v., "mentor," Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mentor>.

<sup>29</sup> Joint Productive Activity, University of California, Center for Research, Education, Diversity, and Excellence. CREDE (n.d.b.), (November 14, 2003), <http://crede.ucsc.edu/standards/jpa.shtml>.

productive activity. 8. Monitors and supports student collaboration in positive ways.<sup>30</sup>

The language the teacher uses is critical in the communication of information and aid in the transformational impact of the mentor-teacher relationship. The employment of language at strategic points of the mentee's course is helpful. This language skill involves the following: listening and responding appropriately to the mentee's needs, questions, and conversation; professional interaction, reframing comments and inquiries, offering encouragement, providing necessary feedback and connecting in meaningful ways.<sup>31</sup> The mentor-mentee relationship is a collaborative endeavor that builds community through shared and joint activities, allowing for contextualization, stimulation, and productive challenges. Engagement in dialogue, and working alongside a mentor enhance skill-building, communicates values, and determines success or failure. Team-work, mutual reliance, and shared success are a few of the outcomes of mentorship. There is a concept called Christian Pedagogy which fuses or seeks to bridge the gap between words and work, concepts and practice, and ideas and service. This may be entitled the "towel and the basin" teaching model of Jesus (John 13). This fusion of doctrine and duty, teaching and application, and heart and hand has a dynamic impact on the practitioners. The student imitates the experienced teacher, and apprentice follows the skilled master. A few biblical examples of the leader-follower relationship are observed: Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Naomi and Ruth, Mordecai and Esther, and Jesus and His followers.

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<sup>30</sup> Joint Productive Activity, University of California, Center for Research, Education, Diversity, and Excellence. CREDE (n.d.b.), (November 14, 2003), <http://crede.usc.edu/standards/jpa.shtml>.

<sup>31</sup> Joint Productive Activity, University of California, Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence, CREDE (n.d.b.), (November 14, 2003), <http://crede.usc.edu/standards/jpa.shtml>.

Trevor Cairney, teacher, author, and Professor of Education at The University of Sydney, Australia, believes pedagogy ultimately shapes the very nature, climate, and culture of classrooms. He suggests that Christian pedagogy requires teachers to mirror the person of Christ in their daily pedagogical choices.<sup>32</sup> Writing also about Christian approach to pedagogy, Peter Jensen, retired Australian Anglican Archbishop posited three questions that should be contemplated. The questions are: “Why? Knowing what our priorities and purposes should be...nurturing ...teaching skills need for life. What? Seeking knowledge of what these priorities and purposes mean for the things we teach. How? Making the wise and informed choices each day about schooling, curriculum and pedagogy.”<sup>33</sup> In his book, *Desiring the Kingdom*, philosopher, author and popular speaker James K. A. Smith wrote, “Christians should help students see the world honestly and critically, and that a redemptive Christian pedagogy can be part of the critique of and dialogue within society.”<sup>34</sup>

Doris Kieser and Jim Parsons provided a list of seven Characteristics of Christian Pedagogy<sup>35</sup>. They are 1. Uniqueness: recognizing and encouraging unique gifts and fostering students within a supportive learning community. 2. Relationship: nurtured and mentored and maintained within educational communities that facilitate student growth. 3. Community: addresses the power of shared purpose and care in opposition to isolation.

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<sup>32</sup> Trevor Cairney, Bryan Cowling and Michael Jensen, *New Perspectives on Anglican Education: Reconsidering Purpose and Plotting a Future Direction* (Sydney, Australia), Anglican Education Commission, 2011.

<sup>33</sup> New Perspective on Anglican Education. [www.edcomm.org.au/](http://www.edcomm.org.au/).

<sup>34</sup> James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom* (Ada, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2009), 25.

<sup>35</sup> Doris Kieser and Jim Parsons, “Characteristics of Christian Pedagogy,” ACSI 17.3, n.d., [pubs.royle.com/article/Characteristics+of+Christia+pedagogy](http://pubs.royle.com/article/Characteristics+of+Christia+pedagogy).

4. Agency: believing that the educational system should help all students come to believe they can impact the world powerfully. 5. Stewardship: a care and consideration for a holistic, responsible relationship with the world, and actively inviting diverse, unique aptitudes and skills into the realm of education. 6. Service: pouring out of one's self for the wellbeing of others. 7. Edification: a collective effort aimed at the synthesis of human action towards building rather than destroying.

### **Pedagogy Master Teachers**

Dr. Perry G. Downs is considered a master in the field of Pedagogy, specifically in the Christian community and institutions of higher education. According to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School where Dr. Perry G. Downs is Professor Emeritus of Educational Ministries, and the author of *Teaching for Spiritual Growth*, Dr. Downs' "areas of expertise include faith development, moral development, moral education, and spiritual formation. He is a member of the North American Professors of Christian Education, the Religious Education Association, and the Association of Professors and Researchers in Religious Education."<sup>36</sup> In 2013 Dr. Downs received the Warren S. Benson Distinguished Educator Award. It is the highest honor of the Society of Professors in Christian Education, awarded to individuals who have made an outstanding lifetime contribution in the field of Christian Education.<sup>37</sup> In a speech Dr. Downs shared two startling discoveries. They are:

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<sup>36</sup> Cairn University, "Perry Downs Receives Award for Lifetime Contributions to Christian Education," January 30, 2014, <https://catalog.tiu.edu/evangelical-divinity-school>.

<sup>37</sup> Cairn University, "Perry Downs Receives Award for Lifetime Contributions to Christian Education," January 30, 2014, <https://catalog.tiu.edu/evangelical-divinity-school>.

The first was that Christian Education is where the action was, because Christian educators sat between the theologian and the person in the pew, translating theology into understandable concepts that had meaning to the life of the believer. The second discovery was that Christian Education [at the time] was focusing on the wrong question. Instead of asking ‘How do you organize a Sunday School?’ it should have been asking ‘How do you grow a Christian?’<sup>38</sup>

In his book, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth*, explored the meaning of spiritual maturity and the instrumentality, responsibility, and agency of the church for that spiritual growth. The answer and approach to the maturity and instrumentality are viewed through the perspectives of theology, developmental psychology, and educational learning theory. Downs is of the opinion that these three perspectives form a unified view of the teaching-learning process based on a biblical view of persons. 1. Theology: the divine side of spiritual growth. What does the nature of God tell us about teaching spiritual maturity? 2. Psychology: how God has designed people to grow. How does human development affect the process of achieving spiritual maturity? 3. Education: the learning process that produces spiritual growth. What is the process people go through to achieve spiritual maturity? The goal is to help readers develop a philosophy of Christian education that will be applicable to a variety of ministry contexts.<sup>39</sup>

Dr. Downs is quoted as saying “Helping people to know God and to be obedient to him is perhaps the greatest gift we can bestow. Understood in this way, Christian education can be one of the most compassionate ministries of the church.”<sup>40</sup> In an article

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<sup>38</sup> Cairn University, “Perry Downs Receives Award for Lifetime Contributions to Christian Education,” January 30, 2014, <https://catalog.tiu.edu/evangelical-divinity-school>.

<sup>39</sup> Perry Downs, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1994), <https://www.harpercollinschristian.com/9780310593706/teaching-in-for-spiritual-growth/>.

<sup>40</sup> Perry G. Downs, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth: An Introduction to Christian Education* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 27.

entitled, *Education as Sacrament*, Dr. Downs argued “for a productive conversation between the social sciences and theology to establish an educational process that is redemptive in nature. As a corrective to disintegrated education, biblical theology can inform educational process to help it become a means of grace for the learner, and in that sense it can be understood as sacramental.”<sup>41</sup>

Another master in the field of pedagogy is Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator, who in 1964 after a military coup was jailed and then exiled from Brazil. Richard Shaull wrote of Freire’s importance and impact on education in the foreword of Freire’s book.

*Pedagogy of the Oppressed.*

His thought on the philosophy of education was first expressed in 1959 in his doctoral dissertation at the University of Recife, and later in his work as Professor of the History of Education in the same university, as well as in his early experiments with the teaching of illiterates in that same city. The methodology he developed was widely used by Catholics and others in literacy campaigns throughout the North East of Brazil and was considered such a threat to the old order that Freire was jailed immediately after the military coup in 1964. Released . . . Freire went to Chile . . . working with UNESCO and the Chilean Institute for Agrarian Reform in programs of adult education. He then acted as a consultant at Harvard University’s School of Education . . . in new educational experiments in rural and urban areas.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Perry G. Downs, “Education as Sacrament,” *Christian Education Journal: Research on Educational Ministry* 8, no 1 (May 2011): 101-113, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/073989131100800107>.

<sup>42</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York, NY: Continuum Publishing Company, 1993), 13.

Paul Freire grew up poor and talked about the oppressed whose voices were silenced or nonexistent. The entire social, political and economic order was designed and programmed to keep the illiterate subdued, in their place and dependent on those at the top. Freire named it the “culture of silence.”<sup>43</sup> Knowledge, upward mobility and a climb out of poverty were the norms of enslavement and keeping the masses “Submerged.”<sup>44</sup> Freire’s assessment is a combination of philosophical, political, and educational theory; that the entire education system was engineered to maintain that culture of silence. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire affirmed that humanization and dehumanization are coexistent realities, and that people strive and yearn for humanization which is thwarted by “injustice, exploitation, oppression, and the violence of the oppressors.”<sup>45</sup> Dehumanization is a distortion of what it means to be human, but it is not a destiny; it must be challenged without itself becoming an oppressor or causing oppression. When Freire applied this concept in education of the illiterate masses, he effectively proposed that the oppressed and those who are in sympathy with their cause to free themselves of stagnation, ignorance and poverty, must make it their undying task to awaken critical thinking and a new awareness that reach deep within them to accomplish. He stated that the task is to liberate themselves and their oppressors:

The oppressors, who oppress, exploit, and rape by virtue of their power, cannot find in this power the strength to liberate either the oppressed or themselves. Only power that springs from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both. Any attempt to ‘soften’ the power of the oppressor in deference to the weakness of the oppressed almost always manifest itself in the form of false generosity; indeed, the attempt

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<sup>43</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 12.

<sup>44</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 12.

<sup>45</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 26.



never goes beyond this. In order to have the continued opportunity to express their 'generosity,' the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well. An unjust social order is the permanent fount of this 'generosity,' which is nourished by death, despair, and poverty. That is why the dispensers of false generosity become desperate at the slightest threat to its source.<sup>46</sup>

With a different kind of empowerment in education, Freire contemplated a partnership whereby the teacher and the student dialogue, problem solve by jointly come to solutions and conclusions about problems thus enriching the learning process. Freire calls the traditional relationship of teacher and student, banking education, which consist of receiving, memorizing and regurgitation information. The lecture method fits this model. It is a sterile, dysfunctional, oppressive system where the teacher retains and maintains control and acts more as an oppressor with certain fixed expectation. Meanwhile the student remains as a passive, unthinking follower. Apparently, Paulo Freire's methodology has impacted new and innovative ways that education is received and taught. This has influenced the current self-learning modules, self-directed and self-paced (learning at you own pace) culture that are prevalent in most schools, colleges, and universities. So, Freire's pedagogy, philosophy and methodology have had wide-ranging and lasting educational benefits. His revolutionary intervention in education, politics and economics are refreshing, and challenged the old obligatory system. His book features four oppressive techniques of conquest, division, manipulation, and cultural invasion that are employed to control people. In contrast, Freire advances four innovative pro-dialogue techniques of cooperation, unity for liberation, organization, and cultural synthesis.

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<sup>46</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 26.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the discipline of pedagogy has great significance for the field of Theology. From the very beginning the Bible is replete with teaching methods of all descriptions for all occasions and people. The family, the Church and community are exhorted and commanded to teach. In his book, *Jesus: A New Vision: Spirit, Culture and the Life of Discipleship*, Marcus Borg wrote of Jesus' pedagogy:

There is a timeless quality to much of what he said, simply because the alternative way which he taught not only stood in tension with his social world but also in opposition to the conventional wisdom of any time. Though he was not a systematic theologian or philosopher who divided his teaching into various topics, his sagely teaching nevertheless revolved around three great themes: an image of reality that challenged the image created by conventional wisdom; a diagnosis of the human condition; and the proclamation of a way of transformation.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Marcus Borg, *Jesus: A New Vision: Spirit, Culture and the Life of Discipleship* (New York: NY: Harper & Row, 1987), 99.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **PROJECT ANALYSIS**

#### **Introduction**

Theological Education and Evangelism converged in significant ways in the writer's ministry in the Caribbean, specifically Guyana, Grenada, and Jamaica, and the United States. Throughout the years after conversion in 1969, there were numerous opportunities where the discussions with church leadership, personal and cooperative observations and assessment highlighted the urgent, passionate, and intentional for informed, educated, and motivated congregations to fulfill the Great Commission. The plea from the prophetic preaching of Minor Prophets, specifically Amos, rings not only true and relevant that biblical illiteracy that fills many pulpits and infects the congregations. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the Words of the Lord," (Amos 8:11), and lamenting, "My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6).

The discipline, art, and science of Pedagogy with its teaching methods are a sure way to address and bridge the ignorance, misinformation, and distortion of the truth of the Scriptures plaguing the current church. There is an undue emphasis laid on the preacher's style, pulpit antics and persona which are passed for as the main attraction in many circles of what is termed, spirituality. There is also great attention on the crowd

size and the financial intake that are used as a barometer of church growth. In many congregations and denominations there is an apparent loss of focus on the purpose and mission of the church as commissioned by the Lord. The heartbeat of Jesus Christ is the salvation of lost souls, and the growth of the saints.

Jesus is the Master Teacher who taught with authority, purpose, and conviction. The disciples in a relationship as learners of Jesus were introduced to the vast array of His teaching methods and powerful impact when He employed parables, stories, simile, proverbs, paradox, questions, and exaggeration as examples. Since different learners are at varied development stages, learn by unique means, and at different situations there is a call for the church and her leadership to seek appropriate approaches to communicate the Gospel. The Apostle Paul was a dynamic teacher whose goal is to train leadership who in turn will train others (II Timothy 2:2). The emphasis of the Macedonia Call as a project is furtherance of the Gospel by teaching, training, and empowering leaders to educate the laity in accomplishing its God ordained mission (Matthew 28:16-20).

This writer's passion has been the expansion and extension of the Gospel by using the biblical concepts and incarnational examples of education and evangelism at every opportunity. There is the absolute imperative to bridge the gap between words and work, concepts and practice and ideas and service. Meaningful connections must be made to reach individuals and communities through collaborative efforts in shared activities, contextualization, stimulation, and realistic challenges. The fundamental questions of representing Christ to the world are who, why, what, how, and when in education and evangelism. This writer has sought throughout his ministry as a pastor and educator at

various forums and occasions to address and answer these essential inquiries from a Christian and biblical worldview.

Emotionalism, traditional, existentialism have contributed to the plight of the modern era of biblical illiteracy. An immediate, radical, and aggressive Intensive Care intervention is the need of the hour to stem the stagnation, lukewarmness, coldness or deadness in congregations (Revelations 3). The urgent appeal is to redouble efforts to teach techniques applicable to current needs. Commencing with thoroughly equipping and qualifying Christian workers in fundamentals of evangelism, and an understanding of basic Bible doctrines will ensure strength and stability in the congregations. With the fundamentals in place the superstructure will stand strong against the erosion and weakness that the winds of apostasy and systematic attacks have unleashed on the church.

The expectation is churches and institutions will experience increased growth instead of the dormancy, undeveloped and undiscovered gifts. The vision is that partnerships with brethren in the Caribbean with advance planning and arrangements of events, venue and accommodations will yield benefits not yet known. The focus is on conducting training seminars, intensives, or workshops on current and pressing theological trends and social justice themes in a Caribbean context rather than what is happening in the United States. This task is to commit to faithful men and women who shall be able to teach others, also. This is investment and multiplication ministry is what makes ministry meaningful, challenging and exciting. Paul writes, “Necessity is laid upon me;” “Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel” and he balances that out by saying, “I do it willingly;” “Strive for masteries,” “Pressing forward” for an “incorruptible crown” (I Corinthians 9) by pursuing evangelistic goals and theological education.

Many individuals and groups have indicated interest and readiness to participation in missionary trips to the Caribbean. There is also indication from Caribbean partners and stakeholders about their identified projects for the present and future. In Grenada, there are plans to evangelize men by strengthening men in the church through a three-day conference. In Jamaica there are expressions for teaching seminars in theology, pastoral care, ethics in ministers' personal finances, and establishing a church budget. Revival, street evangelism and child evangelism endeavors are being planned in Guyana and Jamaica. Seminars on pastoral mentoring, retirement and remaining active in ministry were identified by several pastors. Several stakeholders and Trinity AME Church are excited and committed to this experience and to witness firsthand, the workings of God's grace overseas, and the effects and fruits of their partnership with churches and institutions beyond their local boundaries.

### **Methodology**

The qualitative methodological approach is used for this project: The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Educational outreach Ministry-Bridge to the Caribbean. The observation is that churches and theological institutions benefit from more advance teaching resources and helps from the concerned compassionate individuals and churches in United States. This qualitative method is a study designed to be consistent with the assumptions of a qualitative paradigm. The qualitative study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem.<sup>1</sup> For this, Pastors and churches were

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<sup>1</sup> John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 1994), 1.

selected based on mutual acquaintance with the writer. The leadership were personally approached over the telephone about the project, followed by a thorough discussion that the writer is conducting this training for the fulfilment of his doctoral degree at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio.

The original intent in designing and executing this project was for face to face in-person training at the selected churches in the United States and the Caribbean during the 2020 summer break. This all changed with the Coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic in mid-March 2020. This respiratory tract infection spreads by droplets from open the mouth and nasal passages restricted all travels and stay at home advisory and restrictions were federal and state mandates. Wearing of a face mask, social distance of six to eight feet, frequent hand washing for twenty seconds and use of hand sanitizer became the new normal. Additionally, all indoor gathering and church services were suspended or restricted. This virus with its implications for infections, severe illness, health complications, and death caused a change in how in the implementation this project. Zoom, webinar, Facebook, YouTube are platforms that this writer and the participating churches had to explore at options to conduct the training. Zoom and the telephone conference call were popular and familiar platforms selected as the most useful for the accomplishment of the writer's project.

Discussions with pastors centered around questions about venue, methods of training considering the COVID 19 pandemic, timeframes for commencement and conclusion of the training, schedule date and time, participants' background with regards to their positions, talents, experience, availability, and level of biblical knowledge. The effectiveness the project's topic was embraced as necessary and a convenient schedule

was worked out with pastors that was most advantageous to the participants and the churches' objectives and fulfillment of their mission statement.

Participants in this ministry project consisted of pastors, local ministers, evangelists, congregational leaders, and church members and interested individuals who were attracted by the topic and desired a greater understanding of theological implications of evangelism and fulfilling the great commission. Respondents expressed high expectations and displayed a positive and strong commitment to the theological training and stated purpose and focus of the study and project. (See Appendix C).

Discussions were held with pastoral leadership regarding participants' ability to access the most appropriate internet platform that would give them suitable and reliable reception. This was necessary in light of the worldwide coronavirus pandemic that is affecting in person gathering of any kind. Participants had access to the two most popular forums: zoom with video and audio capability, and telephone conference calls over a land line with an audio only capability. Two pastors reported that they streamed this teaching on evangelism on their churches' Facebook page as well. The full extent and impact of the live stream was not accessible or known to this writer.

The participants are from congregations located in South Carolina and Grenada. These churches had participants located in different geographical locations to include other countries and states within the United States. Congregations in other Caribbean islands countries known to this writer were not able to participate because there were conflicts with their scheduled activities for the year, and the disruptive impact and adjustment that COVID 19 has on the church calendar. The participants represented mostly small to medium size congregations with approximately thirty to eighty active



memberships. Participants were from various and distinct social, educational, cultural, and economic backgrounds. The gender of the participants was both male and female. They were college students, retirees, schoolteachers and administrators, small business owners and critical emergency first responders to name a few. The educational achievement range was up to a master's level. The age range of participants is from the early twenties to the early seventies.

The total number of the participants from five churches reported throughout this project was 104. The 104 participants multiplied by an average five meetings total 520 meeting participants. Each meeting session lasted approximately one and one-quarter hour of training time, which totaled 5.75 hours. The five training sessions lasting 5.75 hours when multiplied equals a total 28.75 hours spent on the theological training on evangelism. The female participants were eighty-nine out of 104 equaling to 92.56 percent and 15.6 percent of the participants were male. There were ten ministers in total of all the training sessions.

The design of research in the evangelistic educational training for the Macedonian Call of providing a ministry bridge to overseas projects manifest itself through various avenues. With the use of Zoom and the Tele-conference call line, the project was underway in late summer. The first church that participated in this Macedonia Call project was St. Paul AME Church in Newberry, South Carolina. In this church, the information gathered the exploratory questions fielded and objectives pursued, took the form of the weekly Bible study. Here, participants were in an open forum where the information from the study gave permission to explore and describe knowledge through open ended questions. The Bible study allowed for free discussion where certain

doctrinal issues required clarity, and where solutions were sought to conflicting ideas. But the objectives were kept in sight without straying too far afield. On certain days, the participants agreed to extend the time slot to address issues that required detailed explanation of a behavior or situation. This was accomplished with attendees expressing satisfaction for allowing further understanding.

In other congregations, a workshop style method was pursued. The material used in the theological training was shared in a power point presentation where participants were asked to give written responses to case studies of biblical incidents. Trainees were supplied with a hard copy of the training manual in addition to the power point which they could follow on their computers/phones. The hard copy facilitated note taking and jotting down their answers and personal thoughts on paper. In fact, all training sessions participants were encouraged to write reflections, thoughts, and questions that they found useful and worthy of further personal exploration. Participants shared their thinking and understanding on how the early New Testament church evangelized in the Roman Empire and studied and apply their Bible (Old Testament).

### **Implementation**

Implementation of this project occurred over a period of several weeks. It was scheduled to commence August and be completed in September 2020. The Coronavirus epidemic influenced a change in the schedule. The training was delayed because the targeted churches as participants were getting accustomed to executing and familiarizing themselves to new methods of conducting worship, bible study and other ministries that were otherwise accomplished by congregating at the Church facility. The churches

participating in the theological training on evangelism signaled their readiness in mid-September 2020. By then using the internet Zoom and other platforms were beyond the trial state. In fact, the project started October 7 and finished December 16, 2020.

There was a pretest (see Appendix B) that consisted of questions designed to probe the thinking and established the participants level of understanding and experience in the theological training they embarked on. The resultant answers determined the threshold of the focus, and base of the instruction and teaching intervention that best meet the needs of the participants.

### **Categorizing Question of the Pretest**

The opening question on the pretest was formatted to determine the participants' conversion encounter with Jesus. Firstly, the question was: What is the first and main qualification of a witness in evangelism? This showed the importance of the salvation experience as foundational to evangelism and Christian witnessing to the unconverted. One cannot share what one does not possess. Daniel Thambyrajah Niles, a Ceylonese pastor and evangelist stated: "Evangelism is one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread." It is hypocritical for a "dead man," an unconverted, to talk to other "dead men" about "life and living." The regeneration issue is therefore a pertinent question to commence this study on sharing one's faith and Savior. Conversion also placed the Christian under obligation to obey the Great Commission of Matthew 28:16-20. Obedience is not optional or a suggestion for the believer; it is a command to be observed and obeyed.

In the training, the story of the four starving lepers is illustrative of this obligatory commitment of witnessing (II Kings 6 and 7). The lepers were victims of the same famine as those in the city of Samaria. They were exposed to unprecedented danger to the besieging enemy Syrian army which surrounded the city, cutting off all outside assistance or rescue. Isolation and alienation from families and society are additional aggravating factors to their physical disease and deformities. Their desperation and facing death in the face, forced them to defect to the enemy's army. Their surprising discovery resulted in a change in their material, physical and financial fortune. While hoarding supplies, their accusing conscience took over when they said, "We do not well." Urgency possessed them when at midnight they heralded to the trapped city about the abundance they discovered and feasted on. This saved the city inhabitants. It is criminal to know of a cure and not share it. These four lepers are exemplary of the discovery of life in Christ and the obligation to share it with others (II Kings 6:24-7:11, 15-18; Romans 1:14-15).

Secondly, participants' responses further revealed that all participants not only expressed a saving faith but while sharing their faith and the Gospel of what obstacles and difficulties they encountered. They were asked to make a list. This question was designed to probe experience, if any, and solicited interaction and engaged sharing without recrimination or causing offence as thoughts expressed were handled with acceptance and openness. The attendees provided the following that closely matched the presenter's list:

I am unsure of how to guide a discussion about the Bible dealing with subjects on such as the Bible, Jesus, hell, and heaven. I fear rejection. I fear that my weaknesses and hypocrisies will be exposed which I am not willing for that to happen. I do not know how to start a conversation about spiritual things. I lack confidence that God can use me. I do

not think people will listen to someone like me. I fear of being kicked out of the family. I fear offending those of other religions because I am saying to them that they are wrong, and Christians are better than others.

Thirdly, several questions were framed as true or false to quickly test and gauge knowledge that participants bring to the training. The format also was a mean to motivate participants to reflect, explore and think effortlessly about the subject matter. The True or false statements used in this study are: (1) Jesus enlisted 12 disciples whose first discipleship training course was in evangelism (True). The intent here was to focus of the importance of training and mentoring as essentials and critical before Christian work is embarked upon. (2) Effective evangelism requires friendly relationships (True). It is therefore crucial that Christians want to share their faith. Friendly relationships beyond the church community are needful to reach the unchurched. Just having Christian friends limits the reach of the Gospel. (3) Evangelism is not social reform, nor does it aim directly at social reform (True). The participants had mixed reactions; some stating that ministry to the poor is a social action and is part of the Gospel and souls are saved through these endeavors. The truth is that evangelism is aimed at changing the human depraved life and generally that radically changes how the believer intersects with social issues for the better. Conversion means change. (4) There are many forms and methods of evangelism, but they all are reduced to Personal Evangelism dealing with the individual (True). Methods of reaching the unsaved are many, such as mass evangelistic efforts like those conducted by the Billy Graham Association, but the one-to-one presentation is what clinches the final decision. The personal touch succeeds because it allows the witness or counselor to deal with the individual's issues, doubts, fears, and sins as they accept Christ

as Savior. (5) A Christ-like character is an argument against which there is no answer. It is the most convincing testimony that can be given (True). The intent was for participants to plummet the compelling attributes of Christ that attract men to the Savior. The participants shared what attributes they know of Jesus such as his compassion, kindness, holiness, and power. (6) Satan is our enemy. If we ignore him and do not focus on his opposition to the Gospel witness, he will leave us alone (False). It is a fact that Satan is the archenemy of man, but ignoring the enemy is not a winning strategy. Satan is relentless and destructive; he is the “roaring lion” that intimidates, and an “angel of light” that deceives. Satan is the persistent “accuser of the believer day and night.” It was pointed out that Satan is the accuser and intimidator, but Jesus is the Advocate and Intercessor (I John 2:2).

Fourthly, there were more in-depth questions that required participants to list ideas, explore issues, and express understanding of biblical principles. Participants were given five theological words with matching meanings that are pertinent in the doctrine of evangelism. The five words with matching meanings are forgiveness with cleansing, regeneration with new birth, reconciliation with reunited, grace with unmerited favor, and repentance with change of mind.

Another basic exploratory theological question centered on the qualities of the Christian witness. Several characteristics of a Christian witness solicited and discussed were about the witness being a person of character, a person of passion and love, a person of conviction, a person of understanding, and a person filled with the Holy Spirit. These attributes were determined to be significant and compelling lending authenticity, and credibility to the unchurched and unsaved audience.

Also, the pretest addressed the question of rewards given to Christian workers: “the labor is worthy of his hire” (Luke 10:2,7). A preface leading into answering this question was the thought-provoking probe: You are saved by grace through faith in the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Since this is so, why does God choose to reward you (participants) for Christian service? God who made humans and endow them with emotional and social sensitivities that include the need for approval and feeling of belonging. Human psychology and experience teach that human nature thrives on incentives and recognition. Several rewards can be deduced from a careful study of Scripture.

In Scripture, the theological concept of crowns is referenced to rewards given to believers as rewards for faithfulness in various endeavors. The Greek word for crown is *stephanos*, meaning “that which encircles,” “surrounds.” In the Greek games those who win or conquer were awarded a wreath. The apostle Paul used the same language for Christian service. Five crowns are mentioned in Scripture. They are the Crown of Life for faithfulness and endurance under trial and suffering (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10); the Incorruptible Crown for self-denial (1 Corinthians 9:25); the Crown of Righteousness for those who love to and wait for Second Coming of Christ (II Timothy 4:8); the Crown of Glory for pastoral service (I Peter 5: 2-4), and the Crown of Rejoicing (Exultation) for soul winning (Philippians 4:1; I Thessalonians 2:19; I Corinthians 3:11-15; II Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10).

With that background of scriptural incentives and particularly of the soul winner crown diadem – crown or headband of jewel symbolic of authority, participants engaged in formulating a written list and later discussed how Christian witness are rewarded. The

list included the following: Fellowship with Christ; Development of Character; Development of talents/gift; Joy Inexpressible (John 16:21); Lasting Friendships formed and Approval Bestowed by the Master (Matthew 25:21; 1Thessalonians 2:19).

Again, in the pretest, there was an exploratory question that drew participants' reflection on their scriptural knowledge of sanctions, considerations, and command (Matthew 28) to evangelize (Matthew 28). The writer's research yielded a list of biblical sanctions that should influence the believer's obedience in evangelistic activities. First, the believer's indebtedness to witness to the unreached is exemplified by Paul's stated obligation to the Romans, "I am a debtor" Romans 1:14; 1 Corinthians 9:16. Second, the believer's divine appointment to bear fruit is made by their Master, "I chose you and ordained you" John 15:16). Third, the example of Early Church in their evangelistic ministry is the model, "Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went" Acts 8:1, 4). Fourth, the compelling Love of Christ is a motivation for evangelism, "The Love of Christ Propels me" II Corinthians 5:14). And fifth, there is accountability at the Beam seat of Christ where believers will be judged and rewarded for faithful service, "We must all appear" II Corinthians 5:10; I Corinthians 3:11-15.

### **Completion of the Pre-test**

After the pretest was completed, the participants were instructed that the same questions will be given at the end of the training. Participants were also informed that the following in-depth theological presentation of the training material was available to them. A printed copy of the PowerPoint used on Zoom and the training manual were available from their pastor. This would facilitate participants' full involvement as they took notes,



forming informed questions, requesting clarity or more information and making appropriate comments.

Following the pretest, and in fact, throughout the rest of the theological training on evangelism, other relevant questions were raised, encouraged, and discussed. They were indicators of the concerns, level of understanding and areas of probing for further clarity and information. Some of the additional questions centered on the definition and nature of salvation, gospel or Bible, prayer, Holy Spirit, and the word “evangelism.” Again, the focus was to establish the basic understanding of preliminary and foundational doctrines of the participants.

### **The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Educational Outreach Ministry-Bridge to the Caribbean (Acts 16:9-10)**

#### *The Implementation of the Project in the Identified Churches*

The participating churches that participated in this theological training on evangelism were Trinity AME Church (Newberry, SC), St. Paul AME Church (Pomaria, SC), Thomas Chapel AME Church (Union, SC), Elzee AME Church (Laurens, SC), Calvary AME Church (Batesburg/Leesville, SC), and Newlife Chapel (Vandome, Grenada). The pastors were cohosts, helped facilitate the workshops, and were a valuable resource in the training on the Zoom. They took attendance and provided feedback.

### **Track One - The Selection Process**

He summoned whom He wanted. . . He appointed. . . He chose from them twelve. (Mark 3:13, 15; Luke 6:13)

Before Jesus selected his disciples, He prayed all night. The appointment was prayerful, personal (by name), showed commitment (dedicated fishermen, tax collectors, etc.) and had potential for growth and could be shaped. The selection was strategically made intending that these chosen vessels are the tools that will impact the various populations and community. The personnel, task and preparedness are crucial to the success or failure of the mission. The background of the disciples also would lend towards sympathy with those were raised in similar environment and common ideas. Someone opined that perhaps the most qualified disciple was Judas Iscariot who was from Jerusalem, and belonging to a patriotic group, but was a dramatic failure, a thief, and the betrayer of Jesus. So, it is not the most qualified, favored, wealthy or the most likely to success that are chosen (read I Corinthians 1:26-31). Jesus explained the cost of discipleship. “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23-26). The rigors and strenuous expectation and demand excluded the would-be or want-to-be volunteers: “Foxes have holes and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head” (Matthew 8:19-22; Luke. 9:57-62; Mark 10:17-23; 12: 28, 34).

The lesson then asked participants to write a one-page testimony of personal salvation experience. The testimony should include when, where, how, who, and under what circumstances. Discussion centered on: What are qualities or qualifications of a Soul Winner? The Soul Winner should be:

(1) A Person of Christ like Character (1Timothy 4:16). This means that Honesty, Integrity, Purity, and Maturity are essentials. Theophilus of Antioch wrote: It is written of the Early Church: They practice continence, observe monogamy, guard chastity, and wipe out injustice, destroying sin with its root. With them justice is lived out, laws are kept, and faith is witnessed to by deeds. They consider truth supreme. Grace protects them. Peace shields them. The Holy Word leads them. Wisdom teaches them. Life is decisive. God is their King.<sup>2</sup>

(2) A person of compassion, love and passion (Romans 9:1-3). Paul and Moses (Exodus 32:30-32) expressed their desire and love for Israel be saved from destruction at the peril of their personal eternal destiny. The witness should display a love of and for Christ and a compassion for those for whom Christ died; the unsaved. This must be expressed with a sense of urgency as to time; fervency as to desire, and responsibility as to calling.

(3) A person of conviction (II Corinthians 5:14). In evangelism, the Christian witness must be fully possessed with a positive persuasion and belief that (a) Mankind is lost without Christ, (b) The word of God is true and truth, (c) The sufficiency of Christ to save to the uttermost, and (d) God's acceptance of repentant sinners.

(4) A person of understanding and tactfulness. Participants were urged to display a thorough grasp of the knowledge of (a) The Message –Bible, (b) The audience or people who are being witnessed to, (3) The circumstance or situation in which the gospel is presented.

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<sup>2</sup> Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Discipleship* (Grand Rapids MI: Fleming H. Coleman, 1987), 112-113.

(5) A person filled with the Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 4:7; Zechariah 4:6; Ephesians 5:15-21). Discussion centered on the person and work of the Holy Spirit in the church and world. Specifically, Christians are baptized, sealed, indwelt, and filled by the Holy Spirit. The filling of the Holy Spirit is a repeated and ongoing experience, be being filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). Evidence of the filling with power and authority are (a) believer speaking to oneself in psalms and hymns of praise, (b) believer singing and making melody in the heart, (c) giving thanks to God, and (d) submitting to one another in the fear of God.

### **Track Two -The Presence Process**

Have I been so long with you? While abiding with you...While I was with them. You have been with Me from the beginning. Lo, I am with you always. (John 14:9, 25; 17:12; 15:27; Matthew 28:20)

Someone wrote of Jesus: “He was His own School and Curriculum.” The Rabbi Jesus was constantly surrounded and accompanied by his disciples. The disciples were with Jesus on the dusty roads, scattered and remote villages, in homes, in boats on the sea, on the mountains, in the temple and synagogues, and in the garden of Gethsemane among other places. All the while Jesus was instructing from the Old Testament about Himself fulfilling all that was written about Him. This is reminiscent of the two Emmaus disciples who spent a few hours Jesus: they had an eye-opening Bible exposition of the Old Testament (Luke 24:13-35). Peter stated “Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed you” (Matthew 19:27; John 6:68-69). John was more striking when he wrote: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life; that which we have seen and heard declared we unto you” (1 John 1:1, 3).

No one who met or spent time with Jesus remained the same. The woman at the well having met Jesus at the well, left her water pot, went, and announced to other seeking Samaritans “Come see a Man that told me all things (John 4:29).” Nicodemus was born again by the Spirit. Levi invited his friends to meet Jesus. Zacchaeus had a home gathering and entertained Jesus. The Blind that received their eyesight followed Jesus. The delivered demoniac was calm and desired to be with Jesus. So, meeting Jesus is a positive and transformative experience while at the same time it cements a bond and relationship that last for eternity. What a presence!

Aldrich writes, “The incarnational/relational method simply takes the presence, proclamation, persuasion model seriously.”<sup>3</sup> He goes on to list seven ways<sup>4</sup> this incarnational/relational model is effective which are as follows. Character is more important than how much one knows (knowledge). People are persons not strangers. All gifts of the Spirit are used, not just that of evangelism. This method also liberates the Christian witness from undue (and unbiblical) pressures in “broadcasting” the message. The context of the Gospel message gives its content relevance. In relationships, presence gives way to verbal dialogue of the Gospel. The incarnational or relational method allows for webs of relationships to develop where the message is shared in a responsible, though sometimes confrontational approach.

Association with Jesus manifests itself in three areas of Discipleship, Friendship, and Relationship. In discipleship, association and presence are prominent between Master and Servant. “The disciple or student is not above his master or teacher, nor is the slave

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1981), 84.

<sup>4</sup> Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 84-85.

or servant above the master” (Matthew 10:24). “The word disciple designates a learner or follower, as in the case of an apprentice, and always implies the existence of a personal attachment which shapes the whole of life of the one described.”<sup>5</sup>

Friendship is the second concept relating to the presence process. Jesus called His followers friends, “You are My Friends” (John 15:12, 14-15). He is Friend that is closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24). This speaks to the issues of intimacy, distinctiveness, shared and lived experiences. Paul described it this way: “That I may know Him and the power of this resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto His death” (Philippians 3:10).

The third concept of the presence process essential in evangelism is relationship. This concept is expressed in Scripture between the Shepherd and His Sheep, the Vine and the Branches, and the Bridegroom and the Bride. These word-pictures and relationships were familiar to the eastern audience, and Jesus “exploited” these in His teachings. For Christian workers in the present age, the association presence is seriously important for mentoring as the “Creation Principle” of “like begetting like.” In evangelism, it is appropriate for the Christian to ask the question “Is it a comfort to know that the recent convert will become just like me?”<sup>6</sup> This was thought provoking as Christian workers and participants were encouraged to think and internalize this truth. If the people that are converted, and then mentored by precepts and presence become like the participant(s), what would their church look like. The power of presence is dynamic for believers.

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<sup>5</sup> Coleman, *The Master Plan of Discipleship*, 135.

<sup>6</sup> Leonard Ravenhill, *Revival Praying* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1962), 29.

### **Track Three – The Holiness Process**

“Take my yoke upon you.” (Matthew 11:29)

The term holiness, saint and consecrate are cognate words. Consecration means dedication, separation from the profane and unclean, and separated unto what is beneficial. It is relinquishment of one’s ownership and embracing God’s good pleasure and will. Consecration is the positive setting apart unto a holy purpose or task. The word sacred is an equivalent word that describes hallowed persons (priest), place (Jerusalem), things (sacrifice), or institutions (temple). So, yoking speaks of a discipline of coming under the control of or bringing to bear one’s movement that is guided to a defined destiny. Yoking is togetherness and a connection that is shared with another and moving in the same direction and with the same purpose.

Consecrated to His service is yielding to the will and way of God. It is the pouring out all devotion, gifts, and talents at the master’s disposal. A few examples of consecration are Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3), Joshua with a drawn sword before a perceived enemy (Joshua 5), Elijah hearing the still small voice in a cave (I Kings 19), Gideon in a cave (Judges 7), and Paul in the desert of Arabia (Galatians 1). When discussed in the light of evangelism, consecration is the connection and bestowal of the workers’ gifts and graces for the exhortation, enhancement, benefits, and delight of others—in this case the Church (1 Corinthians 12). In the exercise of the consecrated gifts with effectiveness there is no room for rivalry, competition, and unwholesome comparison. Further, feelings of inadequacy have crippled many Christian workers. There is an urgency to be filled, led, and empowered for consecrated gifts of our body and talents (Romans 12:1-2).

As one is yoked with Jesus, the trained Christian witness begins the discovery of their spiritual abilities. Serving others or involvement in evangelism only furthers the development of existing talents and opens an avenue for greater service. New gifts might be recognized and confirmed with honest evaluation and critique. Participants were introduced to other website resources where electronic copies of spiritual gift assessments are available for free. A notable spiritual gift assessment inventory is the Myers and Briggs Assessment.

#### **Track Four -The Impartation Process**

“Receive ye the Holy Spirit.” John 20:22

“Freely ye Received, Freely Give” (Matthew 10:8) are words that Jesus incorporated in the sending of the disciples to the lost sheep of Israel. John wrote that Jesus breathed on the disciples saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). The person and ministry of the Holy Spirit are indispensable to the Church and its work of evangelism whereby sinners are delivered and kept from Satan’s chains of enslavement and rescued from eternal damnation. A thought worth pondering is “Our inadequacy is met by God’s sufficiency in overcoming the enemy’s intransigency.” Satan knows that he is a forever defeated foe at Calvary, but he fights on as if he has the prospects of still winning.

Participants raised questions on the meaning, relevance, and distinction of the baptism, indwelling, sealing, and filling of the Holy Spirit. Discussion finally centered on understanding the Holy Spirit and the ministry, specifically in evangelism prisoners of Satan are snatched from his grasp. So, entering the “strongman’s house” requires the



authority and power that is available and necessary through submission to the Holy Spirit. Other aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit are bestowal of power, giving utterance, inspiring boldness, enlightening believers, giving discernment, overcoming demonic powers, and preparing hearts. Illustrations of these are highlighted in and drawn from incidents and lives in the Acts of the Apostles.

### **Track Five – The Experience Process by Demonstration**

“I have given you an Example.” (John 13:15)

Someone said of Jesus and His disciples: “Classes were always in session.” This was evident throughout his life, but especially at the last supper when Jesus took of His robe and assumed the role of a servant. With water in a basin and a towel in hand He washed His disciples’ feet. That example was the embodiment of service: “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

In conducting effective evangelism there must be “Verbalization and Incarnation”<sup>7</sup> and “visualization and Verbalization” of the truth.<sup>8</sup> Joseph Aldrich wrote in *Life-Style Evangelism* that (John 1:14) provided a model for evangelism. “It declares Christ’s *purpose*: to glorify His Father. It sets forth His *strategy*: to incarnate the truth (to become flesh). And it describes His *methodology*: to be full of grace and truth.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 20.

<sup>8</sup> Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 31.

<sup>9</sup> Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 31.

In discussing “Becoming before Broadcasting,”<sup>10</sup> Aldrich stated that Aristotle focused on three qualities of the successful communicator. First, he must have *ethos*, a term related to our word “ethical.” The finest communicator loses his credibility if his integrity is questionable.

The second quality is *pathos* meaning “sympathy and empathy.” In this, the speaker shares the audience’s hopes, yearnings, and longings. The third quality is *Logia*. The term Logos means “word.” The communicator must have something to say.

There are some basic suggestions<sup>11</sup> to follow for effective evangelism and in living out the mission of the Lord are: (1) Use common sense. (2) Should you evangelize everyone you meet? (3) Be ethical. (4) Avoid embarrassment. (5) Know when to desist, but do not give up easily in the face of difficulty. (6) Buy up opportunities. Every contact that that is made is a potential “child of God.” (7) Obey the urging of the Holy Spirit: Permission and Restraints. (8) Be prepared: Readiness to present the Gospel.

### **Track Six – Delegation Process**

“I will make you fishers of men.” Matthew 4:19

There is a legend which recounts the return of Jesus to glory after His time on earth. Even I heaven He bore the marks of His earthly pilgrimage with its cruel cross and shameful death. The angel Gabriel approached Him and said, “Master, you must have suffered terribly for men down there.”

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<sup>10</sup> Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 35.

<sup>11</sup> J. C. Macaulay and Benton Macaulay, *Personal Evangelism* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1956), 50-52.

“I did,” Jesus said.

Gabriel asked, “Do they know all about how you loved them and what you did for them?”

“Oh, no,” said Jesus, “Not yet. Right now, only a handful of people in Palestine know.”

Gabriel was perplexed. “Then what have you done to let everyone know about your love for them?”

Jesus said, “I’ve asked Peter, James, John and a few more friends to tell other people about Me. Those who are told will in turn tell other people about Me, and MY story will spread to the farthest reaches of the globe. Ultimately, all of mankind will have heard about My life and what I have done.”

Gabriel frowned and looked rather skeptical. He knew well what poor stuff men were made of. “Yes, he said, “but what if Peter and James and John grow weary? What if the people who come after them forget? What if way down the twentieth (twenty-first) century, people just don’t tell others about you? Haven’t you made any other plans?” And Jesus answered, “I haven’t made any other plans. I am counting on them.”<sup>12</sup>

### *The Advantages of Personal Evangelism*<sup>13</sup>

First, all can do it (Acts 8:1, 4). Though not all is equally skillful, fully prepared and or equally successful, all can do evangelism. A witness takes the stand; a fisherman fishes; a light must shine, and an ambassador represents his country. “Let the redeemed

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<sup>12</sup> Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 15-16.

<sup>13</sup> Macaulay and Macaulay, *Personal Evangelism*, 53-61.

of the Lord say so.” Participants writing a one-page testimony is a useful exercise that enables them to focus on that effort and making it easier to share with confidence.

Second, opportunities abound: Recognize them. Seize them. “Every social relation was a tie by which men might be drawn heavenward” (Adoniram Judson). The openings are in every marketplace of life. In Acts 16, Paul witnessed at the beach, on the streets and in jail.

Third, attention is focused on the individual. This personal, even private moment enables the singular audience to be more ready to unburden their soul’s spiritual needs that may lead to a commitment to Christ as Savior.

Fourth, enables dealing with individual problems. That means people are free and uninhibited to discuss deeply held beliefs, ask questions without shame or reproach, and confess things that others do not know. This confidential moment is sacred space for the Christian witness.

Fifth, get away from professionalism. No need for a license, or ordination, or fancy title. The Lord uses various vessels, diverse personalities, and background. Biblical examples abound of such diversities (David a shepherd, Noah a shipbuilder, Peter a fisherman, Matthew a tax collector, and Paul a persecutor and blasphemer, to name a few).

Sixth, a personal touch succeeds where other methods fail (II Kings 4:18-37). Elisha predicted that a woman and husband who showed hospitality to him on his preaching tours would have a child. This was fulfilled and then the child later fell sick and died. The distressed woman contacted Elisha about the death of her child. Elisha sent his servant Gehazi with instructions to place his staff on the child’s face to raise the child

from death. Gehazi did as instructed but nothing happened. Elisha finally came and saw the dead child in his room. Elisha prayed and stretched himself on the child (making personal contact) and the child's life returned to the body. The lifeless impersonal staff and faithless Gehazi could not raise the dead. It took the personal contact to bring back warmth and life to the dead. This illustrates the power and success of the personal touch in evangelistic outreach.

### **Track Seven – Management and Supervision Process**

“Do ye not yet perceive?” Mark 8:18

In the management and supervision of Christian workers training is a necessity which specifies expectation, outcomes, and standards. Also, essential in supervision are issues of delegation with trust, modeling, feedback, assessing strengths/weaknesses, inspiring motivation, and handling conflict resolution.

The purpose of training (Ephesians 4:12-14) is edification, perfecting of the saints for work of the ministry, and fulfilling the great commission. The training was put to test when Jesus sent the disciples on tours in teams with instructions, and with authority and empowerment work in the fields (John 20:21-22).

There are incentives and reward for laborers (already mentioned) who will give an account of their work. The disciples reported the joys and excitement, including “demons subjected to them.” Jesus phrased it “I beheld Satan as lightening fall from heaven.” (Luke 10:18). Supervision gives those trained a sense of safety, a feeling of freedom, a boost of boldness and confidence, provide boundaries, and enhance the prospect success. “The laborer is worthy of his hire.” Paul discussed rewards, and warned Christian

workers that the quality, motivation and nature of their activities will be examined by the penetrating eyes of the Lord, revealed by fire, and be declared in terms of the perishable materials: wood, hay, straw, and nonperishables: gold, silver and precious stones in (1 Corinthians 3: 9-15) and (II Timothy 4: 7-8).

### **Track Eight – Reproduction Process**

“Go and bring forth fruit.” (John 15:16)

“These are “the children God has given Me.” (Hebrews 2:13)

There are at least two approaches to the expansion of the gospel, church growth, and maturity. Some church growth advocates have advanced the addition principle, “The LORD added to the church daily (Acts 2: 47). Others have proposed the multiplication principle of “make disciples” (Matthew 28:18-20). This writer has heard the following illustration used several times to highlight the differences and benefits of the two approaches. In the addition principle, if one person led one thousand souls to Christ in one year, then over thirty-six years there will be 36,000 converts. Using the multiplication principle, if one person leads three persons to Christ and then discipled them to do the same each year. Over the same thirty-six years this will result in an explosive and exponential growth to 1,048,576. This training on evangelism is designed to train workers to lead converts to Christ, train and “make disciples” of them. This will effectively hasten the gospel message to the ends of the word to the unchurched and unreached. Thus, fulfilling the Great Commission of Matthew 28:16-20, “Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish...your kind” (Genesis 1).

### **Assessment of the Implementation of this Training**

#### *Feedback from participants*

The theological training on evangelism in The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Educational Outreach Ministry-Bridge to the Caribbean was presented to churches in the Caribbean and the United States, utilizing Zoom. This training addressed the intent and fulfillment of the Great Commission to make disciples and reaching the world with the gospel. The training consisted of a training manual (See Appendix C) and a power-point presentation. The participants expressed their appreciation for this training, and desired that this material be replicated in other setting of evangelism training. The pastors also embraced the biblical training as beneficial, necessary, and timely for their congregations. Upon hearing about the Macedonia Call project, one leader requested this training for his congregation. He wanted to incorporate and implement this theological training as part of his 2021 strategy to fulfill his vision of church growth and discipleship.

Another pastor participated with her congregants this training on evangelism and discipleship. They appreciated the training because it was easy to follow with its use of visual aids (power point) followed helpful information, thought-provoking questions, and insightful answers. They reported that truths gained were phenomenal. They looked forward to additional training. Another pastor wrote that this training was informative, useful, and accessible for the thirty-three participants in his church. The census of opinion by participants and the pastor was a desire for similar additional training on evangelism and discipleship. The pastor also hoped that this Macedonia Call theological

training on evangelism be presented at other forums where pastors with their congregations gather.

#### *Weakness and improvement of this training*

This project had some weaknesses that could be improved. First, recruit and involve more churches from the Caribbean in the training. Even though the curtailment was due to the COVID 19 pandemic, start planning earlier would allow for more churches to participate. Second, add more sessions or lengthening current individual lesson session to accommodate a relaxed learning environment rather than making participants feel rushed. Third, the training might have been more beneficial if participants were given the opportunity to go into the community to demonstrate principles taught in the training. This feedback could further strengthen the training, providing helpful critique of the material and processing participants' thoughts of what went well and how they felt about the practical implementation of training.

#### **Summary of Learnings**

During three years at United Theological Seminary in the Doctor of Ministry Program, there were many occasions for learning. I was impressed with each week of intensives for three years where the themes were well organized with presenters who may not be the experts in their fields, but shared from a wealth of human experiences, common struggles, and humble successes. Faculty, staff, and students were exposed to various ministry opportunities, ideas that were tried and inspiring testimonies from



women, the disabled, missionaries and others who opened their ministries for scrutiny and questions. Their vulnerability was refreshing.

The mentors of the Prophetic Preaching and Praxis cohort taught me how to navigate life and ministry by observing the way they handle demanding schedules, an inundation of written assignments, constant barrage of emails, telephone calls and texts, and above all, maintained exemplary spiritual disciplines. These three dynamic mentors, Dr. Robert Walker, Dr. Kenneth Cummings Sr., and Dr. Brenda Braam, taught and manifested caring, compassion, and a genuine investment in would be doctors of the church. The lives of the mentors will live on through the ministries of their students. One very telling example of their courage and leadership was in May 2019, when they addressed racial inequality on the UTS campus in Dayton, Ohio. The all-minority group, Prophetic Preaching and Praxis, was on the schedule for on campus meetings, but without an assigned meeting room as other cohorts had. Our Focus Group shuffled from one space to another because all meeting rooms or spaces were occupied. But this was not the case since several classrooms were unoccupied and unused. Our mentors showed courage that day to immediately address this inequality; this spoke volumes to the students about a profile in leadership and addressing difficult situations with dignity. The spouses of mentors operated in the background but played a meaningfully unpaid role as they shared in their lives, ministry, and progress.

I have learned from the Focus Group gatherings in Beaumont, Texas and Birmingham, Alabama that students of the Prophetic Preaching and Praxis are exemplary and committed to their community, context, and churches. I learned lessons of teamwork, sacrificial service, and endeavor for excellence and shared fellowship. The Focus Group

also toured historic Civil Rights sites. In Alabama, the group visited the Edmond Pettus Bridge in Selma, the site of the march on Bloody Sunday by Civil Rights Movement on March 7, 1965. It was a solemn occasion of remembrance when students and mentors prayed and walked over the bridge ever cognizant of the confrontation by state troopers, and the actions of racist elements who viciously attacked, indiscriminately beaten, and tear gassed the marchers. The Focus Group also toured The Legacy Museum, in Montgomery, which is funded by the Equal Justice Initiative, a nonprofit organization. The museum displayed the history of slavery and racism in America, beginning with the slave trade, and traced Atlantic crossing, enslavement, racial lynching, segregation, and racism. Pictures, written documents, testimonies, and other artifacts were well organized.

Equally educational were the visits to the historic Dexter Avenue Baptist Church where Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. pastored and the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church with its basement museum. This museum documents in detail the haunting memory of the bombing of the church on Sunday, September 15, 1963. The Ku Klux Klan planted nineteen sticks of dynamite that exploded at 10:22 a.m. killing four young girls and injuring others. There were vivid pictorial reminders of sacrifice, perseverance, resilience, and courage of Blacks in America in the face of great oppression. These memorable lessons from history resonated with me by bringing to life events, people and movements that are still relevant.

### **My takeaway about myself from this doctoral program**

I learned that perseverance is essential to growth. There were some discouraging moments when I felt overwhelmed with first understanding the assignments and the

challenge to fully use and integrate the web based electronic system. With some timely assistance I managed to finish this program. I could not do it alone. I also learned afresh that God's timing and providential leading are remarkable. My faith is deepened. It is amazing that the Lord supplied abundantly. My heart was awakened with praise as God's strange and unique demonstration of confirmation again and again that I was appointed to do this doctoral degree at United in August 2018. My wife, Maxine, encouraged it. My mentors shepherded it and the Lord blessed it.

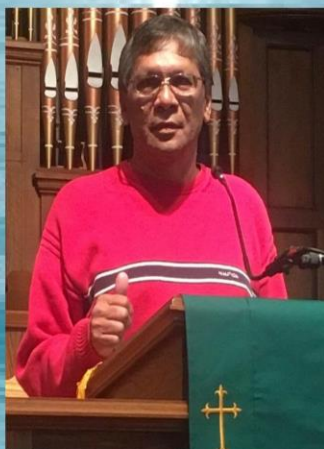
## **APPENDIX A**

### **EVANGELISM SEMINAR FLYER**

# *Join the Evangelism Seminar*

## **Macedonian Call: An Evangelistic and Educational Outreach Ministry-Bridge to the Caribbean**

with  
**Rev. Bobby Seepersaud, M.Div.,  
D.Min. Candidate at United Theological Seminary  
Dayton, OH**



**When:** October 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

**Time:** Wednesday (7 pm to 8:30 pm)

**Sponsor:** Rev. Ken Charles  
St. Paul AME Church  
1945 Hope station Rd  
Newberry, SC 29126

**Medium:** Zoom (Virtual)

**How:** To participate, please sign up through  
the pastor of your church.

**These training sessions are designed for  
pastors and lay leadership. This course  
was designed for Church Growth and  
discipleship, and to bring non-believers  
to Christ.**

**The Seminar will focus on:**

- Church Growth
- Growing in our spiritual walk
- Growing in our evangelical  
outreach

## **APPENDIX B**

### **PRE/POST-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE**

## PRE/POST-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is the first and main qualification of a witness in evangelism?

2. Where is the Great Commission found?

3. While sharing my faith and the Gospel, I encountered certain obstacles/difficulties. Make a list. For example:

I am unsure of how to guide a discussion about the Bible

I fear rejection

I don't know how to start a conversation about spiritual things

I lack confidence that God can use me.

I don't think people will listen to someone like me

4. True or False

Jesus enlisted 12 disciples whose first discipleship training course was in evangelism.

5. True or False

Effective evangelism requires friendly relationships. It is therefore crucial that Christians want to share their faith.

6. Match the words with their meanings

A. Forgiveness

1. New Birth

B. Regeneration

2. Unmerited Favor

C. Reconciliation

3. Cleansing

D. Grace

4. Change of Mind

E. Repentance

5. Reunited

Answers: A-3; B-1; C-5; D-2; E-4 (The answers were not on the survey).

7. True or False

Evangelism is not social reform, nor does it aim directly at social reform.

8. True or False

There are many forms and methods of evangelism, but they all are reduced to "personal evangelism" dealing with the individual.

9. True or False

A Christ-like character is an argument against which there is no answer. It is the most convincing testimony that can be given.

10. What qualities do you look for in someone who is a Christian witness? List you top three qualities. Possible answers:

A saved/converted individual (John 3:3, 6)  
 A Person of Holiness of Character (Isaiah 52:11; Jeremiah 23:32)  
 A Person of Passion/Love  
 A Person of Living Faith (Matthew 9:29)  
 A Person of Humility/Simplicity (Matthew 11:29)  
 A Person of Conviction/Earnestness/Seriousness/Sobriety  
 A person of Understanding  
 A Person of Filled with the Holy Spirit

11. *True or False*

Satan is our enemy. If we ignore him and don't focus on his opposition to the Gospel Witness, he will leave us alone.

12. You are saved by Grace through Faith in the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Since this is so, why does God choose to reward you for Christian service? What do you think? Discuss.

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13. What Rewards/Incentives for Christian witness are presented or deduced from Scripture? <sup>1</sup>

Fellowship with Christ  
 Development of character  
 Development of talents/gifts  
 Joy inexpressible (John 16:21)  
 Lasting friendships formed  
 Approval Bestowed by the Master (Matthew 25:21; 1Thessalonians 2:19)

14. The Scriptures COMMAND us to evangelize (Matthew 28). What other sanctions or considerations do you know of that should cause you to engage in evangelism? <sup>2</sup>

Our Indebtedness (Romans 1:14; 1 Corinthians 9:16, "I am a debtor")  
 Appointment (John 15:16, "I chose you and ordained you")  
 Example of Early Church (Acts 8:1, 4, "They that were scattered abroad went Preaching.")  
 Compelling Love of Christ (II Corinthians 5:14 "The Love of Christ Propels me")  
 Accountability at the Beam seat of Christ (II Corinthians 5:10 "We must all appear.")

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<sup>1</sup> J.C. Macaulay and Benton, *Personal Evangelism*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1956), 95-103.

<sup>2</sup> J.C. Macaulay and Benton, *Personal Evangelism*, 62-68.



**APPENDIX C**

**PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

## PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

### Evangelism and Discipleship: A Training Course for Believers

As a member of \_\_\_\_\_ Church, you are being asked to participate in a training course on evangelism and discipleship.

#### **Description and Purpose of Project:**

**The Macedonia Call: An Evangelistic and Educational Outreach Ministry Bridge to the Caribbean** is a multidimensional project that seeks to address some specific ministry needs identified in various local churches in the Caribbean, through partnership with local congregations in the United States. One dimension of this project, which is also the first step, is a six session course on **Evangelism and Discipleship** in which pastors and their leadership teams will be asked to participate in to advance their readiness for greater community involvement.

This course will consist of six one hour teaching segments that will train on the fundamentals of evangelism and discipleship. These will be conducted by Rev. Bobby Seepersaud through the Zoom platform. The course will begin with a pre-test of 15 to 20 questions. This is NOT a graded test, but rather it will give a baseline of your understanding of evangelism. The course will end with a post-test which will be a repeat of the pre-test. This too, will not be graded, but instead will show how much knowledge was gained from the course. Participants will also be given a course guide and workbook which they will use throughout the duration of the course.

**Participation and Potential Benefits:** Your participation in this course will be voluntary. Should you decide to participate, there is a good chance that you will improve your ability to witness and lead others to Christ (Matthew 28:18-20). Your participating in the training might also result in your personal spiritual growth. Also, your becoming better at witnessing could lead to increase in church attendance and membership. Should you decide to start the course, you may change your mind and withdraw at any time, without any negative consequence.

**Privacy:** Except for your name, no personal information will be collected. This will be kept securely with your pastor and Rev. Seepersaud. Information provided will be treated in confidence.

#### **Your Consent to Participate:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, voluntarily consent to participate in the Evangelism and Discipleship training course as outlined in this **consent document**. I fully understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without penalty.

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Note: Your name will only be used to track attendance and to issue a Certificate of Completions. This information will be destroyed once the project is completed.

**Course Contact Information:**

Name: Rev. Bobby Seepersaud  
Address: Lexington, SC  
Email: sureshbp27@gmail.com  
Telephone: (803) 586-7233

**APPENDIX D**

**PROJECT TRAINING MANUAL**

## PROJECT TRAINING MANUAL

### Track One – The Selection Process

He summoned whom He wanted. He appointed. He chose from them twelve.  
Mark 3:13-15; Luke 6:13

Before Jesus selected his disciples, He prayed all night. The appointment was prayerful, personal (by name), showed commitment (dedicated fishermen, tax collectors, and so forth) and had potential for growth. The personnel, task and preparedness are crucial to the success or failure of the mission. Jesus explained the cost of discipleship (Luke 9: 23-26). The rigors and strenuous expectation and demands excluded the would-be (“want-to-be”) volunteers (Matthew 8:19-22; Luke 9:57-62; Mark 10:17-23; 12: 28, 34).

#### What are qualities or qualifications of a Soul Winner?

The Soul Winner should be:

A Person of Christ like Character (1Timothy 4:16)

Honesty

Integrity

Purity

Maturity

It is written of the Early Church: They practice continence, observe monogamy, guard chastity, and wipe out injustice, destroying sin with its root. With them justice is lived out, laws are kept, and faith is witnessed to by deeds. They consider truth supreme. Grace protects them. Peace shields them. The Holy Word leads them. Wisdom teaches them. Life is decisive. God is their King.<sup>1</sup>

Theophilus of Antioch

A Person of Compassion/Love/Passion (Romans 9:1-3)

Display a love of and for Christ and a compassion for those for whom Christ died (the unsaved). Do it with a sense of: Urgency (time).

### Track Two – The Presence Process

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<sup>1</sup> Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming Coleman, 1987), 112-113.

Have I been so long with you... While abiding with you... While I was with them... You have been with Me from the beginning... Lo, I am with you always.  
John 14:9; 17:12; 15:27; Matthew 28:20

Someone wrote of Jesus: "He was His own and Curriculum." Peter stated "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed you" (Matthew 19:27; John 6:68-69). John was more striking when he wrote: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes, which we have Looked upon, and our hands have Handled, of the Word of Life: That which we have seen and heard declared we unto you" (John 1:1, 3).

Association with Jesus manifests itself in three areas of Discipleship, Friendship, and Relationship. No one who has met or spent time with Jesus remains the same. The woman at the well left her water pot and went and announced, "Come see a Man that told me all things." Nicodemus was born again by the Spirit. Levi invited his friends to meet Jesus. Zacchaeus had a home gathering and entertained Jesus. The Blind that were healed followed him. The delivered demoniac was calm and desired to be with Jesus. So, meeting Jesus is a positive and transformative experience while at the same time it cements a bond and relationship that last for eternity. What presence!

Aldrich writes, "The incarnational/relational method simply takes the presence, proclamation, persuasion model seriously."<sup>2</sup> He goes on to list seven ways<sup>3</sup> this incarnational/relational model is effective which are as follows. Character is more important than how much one knows (knowledge). People are persons not strangers. All gifts of the Spirit re used, not just evangelism. This method also liberates the Christian witness from undue (and unbiblical) pressures in "broadcasting" the message. The context of the Gospel message gives its content relevance. In relationships presence gives way to verbal dialogue of the Gospel. The Incarnational/Relational Method allows for webs of relationship to develop where the message is shared in a responsible, though sometimes, "confrontational," approach.

## Discipleship

Master and Servant: "The word disciple designates a learner or follower, as in the case of an apprentice, and always implies the existence of a personal attachment which shapes the whole of life of the one described."<sup>4</sup>

Fervency (desire)

Responsibility

Calling

<sup>2</sup> Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1981), 84.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 84-85.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Discipleship*, 135.

A Person of Conviction (II Corinthians 5:14)

He must be fully possessed with a positive persuasion and belief that:  
 Mankind is lost without Christ  
 The Word of God is True and Truth  
 The Sufficiency of Christ to Save to the Uttermost  
 God's Acceptance of Repentant Sinners

A Person of Understanding and Tactfulness

Display a good grasp of the Knowledge of:  
 The Message  
 The Audience/People  
 The Circumstance/Situation

A Person Filled With the Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 4:7; Zechariah 4:6; Ephesians 5:15-21)

Speaking to oneself  
 Singing and Making Melody in the heart  
 Giving Thanks to God  
 Submitting to one another in the Fear of God

Friendship

I call you Friends

“Effective evangelism requires friendly relationships. It is therefore crucial that we spend the time and effort necessary to befriend those with whom we want to share our faith. By showing an interest in them, listening to them, getting to know them, and cultivating a warm, caring relationship with them, we can earn the right to ask personal questions and share with them the Gospel, which addressed their very personal needs.”<sup>5</sup>

Relationship

Shepherd and His Sheep  
 Vine and Branches  
 Bridegroom and Bride

### **Track Three – The Holiness Process**

“Take my yoke upon you.” Matthew 11:29

The term holiness, saint and consecrate are cognate words. Consecration means dedication, separation unto and set apart unto a holy purpose or task. Yoking speaks of a connection that is shared with another and moving in the same direction and with the same purpose.

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<sup>5</sup> D. James Kennedy, *Evangelism Explosion* (Coral Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1996), xii.

Consecrated to His service is yielding to the will and way of God. It is the pouring out all devotion, gifts and talents at the master's disposal.

The gifts and graces are bestowed upon individuals for the exhortation, enhancement, extension, benefits and delight of others—in this case the Church. (I Corinthians 12).

There is no room for rivalry, competition and unwholesome comparison in the exercise and effectiveness of the gifts.

The feeling of inadequacy has crippled many Christians. There is an urgency to be filled, led and empowered for consecrated gifts of our Body and Talents (Romans 12:1-2).

### **Gift Discovery**

Discovery of Gifts is made while serving others.

Discovery of Gifts is made when one is engaged in use of talents already possessed.

Discovery of Gifts is confirmed when witnesses give honest evaluation.

Take a Spiritual Gift assessment inventory (such as Myers and Briggs).

### **Track Four - The Impartation Process**

“Receive ye the Holy Spirit.” John 20:22

“Freely ye Received, Freely Give” (Matthew 10:8) are the words that Jesus incorporated in the sending of the disciples to the lost sheep of Israel.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is indispensable to the work of delivering sinners from Satan's chains of enslavement. Our inadequacy is met by God's sufficiency in overcoming the enemy's intransigency.

### **The Holy Spirit Bestows:**

Power

Gives Utterance

Inspires Boldness

Enlightens Believers



Gives Discernment

Overcomes Demonic Powers

Prepares Hearts

### **Track Five - The Experience Process by Demonstration**

“I have given you an Example.” John 13:15

Someone said of Jesus and His disciples: “Classes were always in session.” In conducting effective evangelism there must be “Verbalization and Incarnation”<sup>6</sup> and “Visualization and Verbalization” of the truth.<sup>7</sup> Joseph Aldrich wrote in *Life-Style Evangelism* that John 1:14 provided a model for evangelism. “It declares Christ’s *purpose*: to glorify His Father. It sets forth His *strategy*: to incarnate the truth<sup>8</sup> (to become flesh). And it describes His *methodology*: to be full of grace and truth.”<sup>9</sup>

In discussing, “Becoming before Broadcasting,”<sup>10</sup> Aldrich stated Aristotle focused on three qualities of the successful communicator.

First, he must have *ethos*, a term related to our word “ethical.” The finest communicator loses his credibility if his integrity is questionable.

The second quality is *pathos*, meaning “sympathy and empathy.” In this, the speaker shares the audience’s hopes, yearnings and longings.

The third quality is *Logia*. The term Logos means “word.” The communicator must have something to say.

### **Some basic suggestions to follow for effective evangelism<sup>11</sup>**

Use Common Sense: Should you evangelize everyone you meet?

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<sup>6</sup> Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 20.

<sup>6</sup> Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 31.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 31.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 31.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 35.

<sup>10</sup> J. C. Macaulay and Benton Macaulay, *Personal Evangelism*, 50-52.

<sup>11</sup> Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 15-16.

Be Ethical

Avoid Embarrassment

Know When To Desist: But don't give up easily

Buy up Opportunities: Every contact is a potential "Child of God."

Obey the (Urging Of) Holy Spirit: Permission and Restraints

### **Track Six – Delegation Process**

"I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:19

There is a legend which recounts the return of Jesus to glory after His time on earth. Even in heaven He bore the marks of His earthly pilgrimage with its cruel cross and shameful death. The angel Gabriel approached Him and said, "Master, you must have suffered terribly for men down there."

"I Did." Jesus said.

Gabriel asked, "Do they know all about how you loved them and what you did for them?"

"Oh, no," said Jesus, "not yet. Right now only a handful of people in Palestine know."

Gabriel was perplexed. "Then what have you done to let everyone know about your love for them?"

Jesus said, "I've asked Peter, James, John and a few more friends to tell other people about Me. Those who are told will in turn tell other people about Me, and My story will spread to the farthest reaches of the globe. Ultimately, all of mankind will have heard My life and what I have done."

Gabriel frowned and looked rather skeptical. He knew well what poor stuff men were made of. "Yes," he said, "But what if Peter and James and John grow weary? What if the people who come after them forget? What if way down the twentieth (twenty-first) century, people just don't tell others about you? Haven't you made any other plans?"

And Jesus answered, “I haven’t made any other plans. I am counting on them.”<sup>12</sup>

### **Track Seven—Management and Supervision Process**

“Do ye not yet perceive?” Mark 8:18

The Necessity of Training

Purpose of Training (Ephesians 4:12-14)

Jesus sent out the Disciples – Teams

Jesus gave Disciples Instructions

Jesus empowered Disciples to do Work (John 20:21-22)

Reward of Training

Jesus waited on the disciples to return to give an account of their labors, encounters, difficulties, strengths and victories. The Disciples reported the joys and excitement, including “demons subjected to them.” Jesus phrased it, “I beheld Satan as lightening falling from heaven.” (Luke 10:18)

### **Track Eight—Reproduction Process**

“Go and Bring Forth Fruit” John 15:16

These are “The children God has given me.” (Hebrews 2:13)

Addition Principle: “The LORD added to the church daily.” (Acts 2:47)

Multiplication Principle: “Make disciples” (Matt 28:18). The exponential growth – If I led one, 1,000 persons to Christ per year for 36 years = 36,000. If I disciple 3 persons who each in turn trained 3 other persons over 36 years that would equal 1,048,576.

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<sup>12</sup> J. C. Macaulay and Benton Macaulay, *Personal Evangelism* (53-61).

### **The Rewards of Evangelism <sup>13</sup>**

That Christian should be incentivized and motivated by the offer of rewards is worth some discussion. (Hebrews 11:24-26; 12:2; Luke 10, 7; I Timothy 5:18; Leviticus 19:13)

1. Fellowship with Christ
2. Development of Character  
Expectation – Live what you Preach
3. Development and (Discovery\*) of gifts
4. Joy Unspeakable (is experienced\*) (John 16:21)
5. Lasting Friendships Formed
6. Approval bestowed (Matthew 25:21; I Thessalonians 2:19)

\*Italics are the author's.

There is a Crown of Rejoicing for soul winners (I Thessalonians 2:19). "They shall be mine...in the day when I make up my jewels (Malachi 3:17). "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:6).

Tell/write out your testimony of how you came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Personal Savior.

Do you know how to lead a soul to Christ?  
Possible approaches:

### **Basic Salvation Plan**

These three approaches are just suggestions where you may begin. You can develop your own that you are comfortable with and you find effective.

The ABC Pan of Salvation

Accept that you are a sinner

Believe that Christ died for your sins and rose again from the dead

Confess your sins and ask Christ into your life/heart

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<sup>13</sup> Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, 15-16.

The Roman Rule/Road (using passages from the Epistle to the Romans)

Romans 3:23

Romans 6:23

Romans 5:8

Romans 10:9-10

Romans 8:1

*The Four Spiritual Laws*

Booklet by Billy Graham Association/Bill Bright Ministry

### **The Advantage of Personal Evangelism <sup>14</sup>**

1. All can do it (Acts 8:1, 4).

Though not all is equally skillful, fully prepared and or equally successful, all can do evangelism. A witness takes the stand; a fisherman fishes; a light must shine; an ambassador represents, and so on.

2. Opportunities abound

Recognize them. Seize them. "Every social relation was a tie by which men might be drawn heavenward." (Adoniram Judson)

3. Attention is focused on the individual

4. Enables dealing with individual problems.

5. Gets away from professionalism.

No need for a License, or ordination

6. A personal touch succeeds where other methods fail (II Kings 4:18-37)

Be Prepared: Ready to Present the Gospel.

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<sup>14</sup> J. C. Macaulay and Belton Macaulay, *Personal Evangelism*, 96-103.

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